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"The Assyrians. The Nestorian Assyrian refugees in Irak, ca. 35,000, seemed to be lost when the outbreak of a massacre showed the hostility of the Mohammedan population and of the army, and when the attempts to find a home for them in South America, British Guyana, Canada had failed. Now suddenly a happy solution has been found by the Commission of the League of Nations for the settling of the Assyrians. A project has been elaborated which foresees the settling of the Assyrians in the region of the Ghab between Beyrouth and Aleppo. 6,000 are already settled provisionally on the Khabur. The expenses of 82 millions French Francs are already covered up to the sum of 73 millions, being contributions from the British, the French and the Irakian government and the League of Nations. The League of Nations will be accomplishing here a work of settling a whole people which will be to its permanent glory. A special gratitude is also due to the British government which has been made responsible formerly to a large extent for the misery of the Nestorian Assyrians. The European Central Office in Geneva granted relief to Assyrian refugee groups on the Lebanon, in Irak and Southern France since many years and was in continuous contact with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Mar Shimun and the Commission of the League of Nations, which should be congratulated on this happy solution of a thorny problem. The special Subcommittee for Assyrians which we had formed four years ago contemplated the issuing of a call to the Churches to give a church to the new Nestorian colony and perhaps the school. The Archbishop of Canterbury has evidently the same idea, and we offered cooperation in the Protestant Churches which are affiliated to our Office, leaving, of course, the precedence to the Archbishop because the Church of England considers the oriental Church in a special way as their pupils."

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"Christian circles have been repeatedly disturbed by the precarious and perilous situation of the Assyrian Christians of Iraq, threatened with extermination, and they have intervened on their behalf with the League of Nations, asking that protection may be assured.

"It is therefore worth drawing the attention of these same circles to the important decisions taken by the recent Assembly of the League of Nations, which solve in a definite and absolutely satisfactory manner, the problems of the establishments of the Assyrian Christians of Iraq.

"After a period of study and the despatch of several missions, and after diplomatic negotiations which revealed, on the part of most governments, a very clear sense of their responsibilities, the settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq, in the plain of the Ghab has

been definitely decided upon. In order to facilitate this settlement, the Assembly of the League of Nations has included in its budget for 1936 a sum of 1,300,000 francs. Added to the contribution from the Government of Iraq, from Great Britain and from the authorities of the territory of the Levant, and to grants from private associations and from those principally concerned, this sum will enable the Assyrians of Iraq to be settled in the region of the Ghab. The total expenditure anticipated for these operations amounts to some 17,000,000 Fr., which will be paid in the course of the next few years as the need arises, under the auspices and with the participation of the League of Nations.

"The plain of the Ghab is adequate for the settlement of from twenty to twenty-five thousand people. Large scale works will however be necessary, and while they are being carried out the majority of the Assyrians will be settled on an estate of 8,500 hectares or on other land in the neighborhood, where they will be able to grow cereals or graze their flocks. Provisional establishments will be made. Five dispensary-infirmaries will be created and it is proposed also, if funds permit, to build a hospital of from 80 to 100 beds. As soon as the works are finished, permanent settlement will take place in the plain of the Ghab itself, where permanent villages will have been built in the meantime. These will take the form of centres accommodating from 2,500 to 4,000 inhabitants, and will be an improvement on scattered villages, since they will facilitate the installation of non-agricultural elements, such as artisans and shop-keepers, will reduce the number of schools, churches, hospitals and dispensaries to be built, and will thus cut down overhead charges.

"Plans of a very precise nature, taking the customs of the people concerned into account, are in hand as regards the administration, education, and the civil, religious and political status of the Assyrians. They will be received as permanent colonists in the mandated territory of the Levant and naturalised at a date to be fixed in agreement with the Council of the League of Nations and after a period which in principal should not be less than 5 years.

"A special organ will have charge of the direction of the settlement operations, working under the authority of the Council of the League of Nations, and in close liason with the High Commission for the mandated territories of the Levant.

"Such, in broad outline, are the decisions of the League of Nations. They constitute a remarkable demonstration of its effectiveness in the social and humanitarian domain."

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"The plain of the Chab is adequate for the settlement of from twenty to twenty-five thousand people. Large scale works will however be necessary, and while they are being carried out the majority of the Assyrians will be settled on an estate of 2,500 hectares or on other land in the neighborhood, where they will be able to grow cereals or graze their flocks. Provisional establishments will be made. Five dispensary-infirmaries will be created and it is proposed also, if funds permit, to build a hospital of from 50 to 100 beds. As soon as the works are finished, permanent settlement will take place in the plain of the Chab itself, where permanent villages will have been built in the meantime. These will take the form of centres accommodating from 2,500 to 4,000 inhabitants, and will be an improvement on scattered villages, since they will facilitate the installation of non-agricultural elements, such as artisans and shop-keepers, will reduce the number of schools, churches, hospitals and dispensaries to be built, and will thus cut down overhead charges.

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E. W. Mc Dowell

Dear Dr. Speer: I am constrained to add a postscript to the letter I have just written you re the Assyrian-Iraq affair; this in order to give you another version of it by a friend of mine, along time resident of Bagdad, not a native of the east, and not a missionary, intimately familiar with the Assyrians; together with an English army physician assigned to look after them in an official effort to settle them on the land in villages in the Mosul Area; much of the land proved barren and, more serious, many of the villages sites proved to be saturated with malaria; an epidemic of malignant malaria broke out among the Assyrians, hundreds dying of it. I personally visited these villages, cooperated with these two good men; I found villages in which 100% of the inhabitants were sick, we having to administer quinine as we went from village to village. The English army physician was remarkably devoted in his ministrations contracted malignant malaria and died. His companion was equally devoted. It is he whom I quote in a verbal statement made in Bagdad to personal friends of mine especially intended for me because of our past relationship and interest in these people.

I condense his statement but do so with strict adherence to the facts:

The Government determined to settle the Assyrians on the land; issued its plan for doing so; this plan was not acceptable to the Assyrians and they said so; the Government gave an ultimatum, "Accept what is offered or get out". The Assyrians retorted, "We will get out". A body of the Assyrians, armed, crossed the northern border of Iraq into French mandate territory to seek settlement there; they were first disarmed but after a conference their arms were returned and they started back to gather together their possessions and their families for a migration into Syrian territory. They were preparing to "get out". The Government then declared the movement to be rebellion and sent regular troops against them near the border; there were pitched battles in which both sides suffered. The Kurds joined in as supporting the troops; then independently attacked Assyrian villages in the neighborhood of Semail and Duhuk whose people were in no way connected with the movement toward Syria; there was unprovoked massacre of some hundreds of innocent Christians, who were in no way involved in the settlement dispute or the migratory movement.

This is the version of the affair sent to me by a competent and honest and disinterested witness.

The epidemic of malignant malaria referred to is an important factor to be kept in mind as prejudicing the Assyrians against some of the sites offered them for settlement: It was a horrible experience.

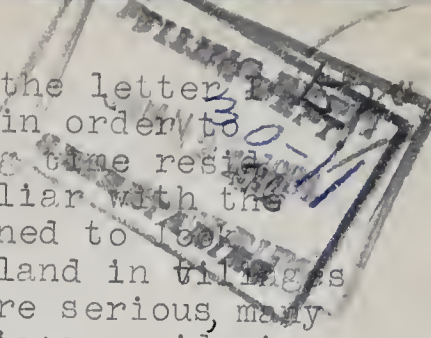
It should be said that the English officer referred to above made an official report of the epidemic which I was privileged to read; it fully justifies the fears of the Assyrians. Doubtless this medical report could be secured of the government in London.

The following factors in this case explain the attitude and actions of the Assyrians: Barrenness of soil; Malarious conditions; Dispersion of the Christians in such wise as to imperil their property and lives; The hereditary enmity aggravated by the war and its aftermath. Last and not least a Highlander spirit of independence saturated with a religious sentiment which had enabled them to maintain a semi-independence enduring for many generations among their beloved rocks of Kurdistan; a passionate attachment to a habitat and manner of life.

E. W. Mc Dowell

December 8-1933.

Mc Dowell
1922-23



F. E. Speer

E. W. Mac Dowell

DEC 11 1933

216-2nd Street north
St. Petersburg, Fla.

December 7 1933.

FILING UNIT
JAN 12 1934
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SECRETARINE

Dr. Robert E. Speer, Sec.
156 Fifth Avenue, New York City, N.Y.

My dear Dr. Speer:

I have just today received through Dr. Wishard your letter to Mrs. Rankin with its enclosure from Mr. Willoughby re the Assyrian trouble. I note the date of your letter and your expressed wish that the letter be returned to you promptly. I am therefore sending it to you directly instead of via Wooster.

It is unnecessary for me to say with what deep interest I have read this statement of the Assyrian - Iraq affair. Mr. Willoughby has stated it as he honestly sees it. But I feel that it can be stated with less reflection on Mar Shimon and the Assyrians and with fuller harmony to all the facts involved, - important facts relating to their recent history and having important bearing upon this catastrophe. Misjudgement of an individual is a serious matter; misjudgement of a people is even more serious. Undoubtedly there have been sins and errors of judgement to be rightly charged up against the Assyrians and their leaders; and just as undoubtedly they have been sinned against, grievously sinned against during this period of the great war, and that not only by Arab and Kurd but more seriously by the great powers on whom must rest final and heaviest responsibility. Only God can mete out justice to them.

Thanking you for the privilege of reading this statement,

Sincerely yours,

E. W. Mac Dowell

R. E. Foster

Confidential

The Summer of 1933.

W. W. [unclear]

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During the past few months, while I have been busy mainly with building operations, events have transpired which have become important, and even exciting; it will be well if I set down a few things now for your reading.

You have often heard us refer to the Assyrians, the group of Christians which came into Iraq at the end of the War, as a result of having been driven out of their homes in Persia and Turkey; some of our best friends are among them, and we have always been interested in their welfare. After a few years residence in Iraq, most of those originating in Persia got back to their former homes; and, while many of them are not happy, in general they have fared well enough. Those whose former homes were in Turkey have not been able to get back except for very short periods, and all hope is now gone that they can ever do so. It seemed to us the wise course for these people to settle down in Iraq,--let all be settled on land who could farm, and let all accept jobs who could get them. A very large proportion of the people themselves came to accept this conclusion, more or less willingly; but there have always been a few leaders cherishing the idea that their folk might remain a homogeneous mass, whether in Iraq or in any other country, and always keep their old language, customs, and even tribal organization. To us there seemed no reason why all this should be kept up, except that thereby said leaders could keep their former positions of power; their motive, therefore, for striving to preserve the Assyrian culture seems largely a selfish one.

Their ends have been pursued persistently, even when unwisely. If any individual Englishman expressed a favorable opinion of their abilities, or said that they should have such and such rights, they would immediately seize upon that statement as an official promise and lay their plans on the basis of British sponsorship. They have tried working through other foreign powers also. Scheme after scheme was brought up for their settlement in some other country than Iraq, where they profess to be unable to trust the Moslem majority, and in which they say they can never enjoy complete security. But any person reasonably informed on current history, knows that there are no countries in the post-War days seeking colonists who do not wish to amalgamate with the country as a whole. When emigration was declared impossible, and schemes were proposed for their remaining in Iraq, these leaders insisted on an amount of autonomy that no sovereign state is willing to grant, and they wanted said autonomy so hedged about with guarantees from the great Powers, that it all served the very purpose of making the Muslim majority distrust and dislike them, and worked decidedly against the growth of a friendly spirit between Assyrian and Arab such as might well have grown up between 1918 and 1933.

The leaders' schemes were so slow in bearing fruit that many individual Assyrians became established in Iraq, ^{as time went on,} and felt less dependent upon Mar Shimon, their Patriarch. He kept his hold principally upon the soldiers in the Levies (referred to below) and the people who settled in the mountains of northern Iraq; for these persons were the more isolated from the central Government of Iraq, less connected with the Government by educational, industrial, social or political ties, and living under conditions more primitive,--permitting a survival of more of the old tribal system.

The situation was further complicated by the existence of the Iraq Levies, a body of hired troops (recruited exclusively from among Assyrians) under direct British leadership, and not controlled by the Iraq Government. At their largest they numbered more than five thousand men, out of a people of little more than fifty thousand altogether. The good pay which these soldiers drew contributed in no small measure to the financing of the people; but re-enlistments were common and a lot of the young men were diverted from learning trades or settling on farms or getting jobs or becoming acquainted with their non-Assyrian neighbors at the ages when they would naturally and easily have done all this. In such regards the Levies was a liability rather than an asset to the welfare of the people as a whole. Still worse was the political and social effect of the prolonged existence in the country of a fighting-force which was admittedly efficient and not under Government control; Arab pride was wounded, and Assyrian arrogance was fostered, and allowed to show itself in obnoxious ways. The Levies have been gradually reduced in number; they are now transposed into an especial guard of only fifteen hundred men; this, in turn, will eventually disappear; so that even this military organization might have passed away without any disastrous consequences had there not been active efforts to foment trouble between Assyrian and Arab. When a soldier was discharged from the Levies, he was allowed to keep his rifle and two hundred rounds of ammunition; this rule served to gradually build up a large reserve of ex-soldiers, well armed, and capable of being misused by unscrupulous leaders.* The true end of the Levies (although not their final disbanding) came about in the summer of 1932 in a very unpleasant manner. In attempting to gain certain immediate political ends, the Patriarch induced the Assyrian officers of the

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(over)

Levies to make certain demands, accompanied by an ultimatum with a threat of wholesale relinquishing of their commissions. The effects of this act were farther-reaching than most people dreamed: the Royal Air Force set a new world's record in troop transportation by bringing British detachments from Egypt to supplant the Levies if the latter should actually stage a general "strike." This showed the country as a whole that Britain can keep such a hold on Iraq as she sees fit, in spite of local difficulties. The threat of "strike", which was a decidedly mutinous gesture, shattered the British confidence in the Assyrians. No matter how many individual Assyrians may secure and hold positions of trust in British commercial firms, or even posts of importance in political agencies, that people as a whole will never again be trusted as they were previous to 1932. It is also doubtful if there will ever again be so many Englishmen ready to espouse the Assyrian cause in any time of trouble as would have been the case had not the unfortunate ultimatum been issued. Finally, the two-faced manner in which the Patriarch manipulated his plan showed such a degree of fickleness and double-dealing that quite a number of the prominent Assyrians from that time began publicly to disassociate themselves from him, and disclaim his political leadership,--choosing to announce themselves as loyal Iraqis, and asking to be considered subjects of Iraq in the same sense that Arabs would be. (You who know Mosul will be interested to know that among these were Qasha Keena, Qasha Yosef Kalaita, Malik Khemmo, Dr. Baba, and Robi Ismail Showo.)

The approaching entry of Iraq into the League of Nations (it was actually consummated in October, 1932) increased the Patriarch's activities, in view of the presumed lessening of British power in Iraq, and the alleged greater danger of ill treatment at the hands of the Iraq Government. At first he tried loudly professing loyalty in front of the Arabs, while secretly working to get political guarantees from Geneva which would establish him in temporal headship over an autonomous "nation." His first disillusionment came after he had strongly denied any knowledge of a certain petition working towards these ends, when a copy of it was secured at Geneva by some Iraqi, translated into Arabic, and published in the local press widely, including the Patriarch's name as the first signer! This should have shown him that he could not work without being discovered by the Arabs, but if he realized the fact, he paid no attention to it; he only continued stubbornly to try to gain his ends. Last winter, he himself made a trip to Geneva. Naturally, by this time he was being closely watched by the Arabs, and the Iraq Government was fast coming to consider him a person whose activities were inimical to the State.

Among the chief complaints of the Assyrians was that they were not properly rehabilitated after losing their pre-War homes. As a matter of fact Iraq had absorbed a surprisingly large number of them in commerce, industry, and even a few governmental positions (mostly police), and quite a few thousand had settled on the land in villages. Compared with their farmer neighbors who were older residents of Iraq, (whether Christian, Arab, Kurd, or Yezidee) the Assyrian villagers were as well off as the average, and better off than the poorest. More had gotten jobs than one would expect in view of the poor business conditions in Iraq (as bad in 1929 as most of the US in 1932, and not improved since). Without trying to make the statement that there has never been any discrimination against the Assyrians, I still maintain that, on the whole, they were as well treated as they could expect, in view of hard times, and better treated than one would expect in view of the non-co-operative attitude of a lot of them. But admittedly there were a few thousand Assyrians far from satisfactorily settled, and for these the Iraq Government prepared one large land reclamation scheme and proposed other plans also. This scheme was not only to provide land for several hundred families, but the work of construction of the irrigation system was also to be given to Assyrians, that they might profit by the wages.

About this time the Patriarch launched a ^{campaign} plan of non-cooperation. Assyrians were forbidden to join in the land settlement scheme; Assyrian children in villages were forbidden to attend the Government schools, and the Patriarch became very insistent that no Assyrian should take up any matter with the Government, except through him. Since following such a policy usually meant personal loss, rather than inflicting any noticeable wound on the Government, an increasing number of his people began to turn from the Patriarch, and the bickering became sharp between the loyalists (to Mar Shimon) and the realists, who wanted to accept matters as they stood and cooperate with the Government,--feeling that their best interests lay in adapting themselves as far as possible to Iraq life.

In May 1933 (I think it was) the Government required Mar Shimon to live in Baghdad, instead of Mosul, and curbed his liberty somewhat. However, they made the mistake of allowing his Aunt, Lady Surma, to remain at large in Mosul, and the intrigue went merrily on.

Early in July, one Yakou, a son of Malik Ismail, with fifty or more armed followers, began to prowl about the mountains as the head of his band, and when summoned by the police to disperse them, refused to do so. An insurrection was right then highly probable, but it was avoided

by a group of English officials and other prominent persons going to Yakou in person and persuading him to go peaceably to Mosul. There he was read a lecture and told to be good henceforth. Furthermore, a surety was demanded, that he would keep the peace in the future; Mr. Panfil, the Episcopal missionary, went bail for him, and after a few days he was allowed to return to the mountains. The Government then called a conference of Assyrian leaders. Mar Shimon himself did not attend, but there were plenty there to plead his cause, and this conference comprised just about every person who could be interpreted as a leader among the Assyrians. First on the program were statements by the Government as to its stand on all the points at issue; then the group was left to discuss matters; the difference of opinion was so strong that the first day's session broke up in disorder, following someone's shouting "What do we want with Mar Shimon any more?" On the following day the Government submitted a paper stating its interpretation of the situation, and setting forth its policies with regard to the Assyrians, then closing with a declaration that these interpretations were accepted as true, and the policies would be obeyed. A very large group of those present signed this paper,--there were more than fifty names, and they include some of the most prominent people; apparently they represent few, if any, less than half of the whole people. Mar Shimon's party appears to have lost followers as a result of the conference, but the adherents who remained lost none of their unquestioning loyalty to him.

After the conference had adjourned, it was certain that there would be further efforts to advance Mar Shimon's cause, but gossip presented such a welter of conflicting stories, mostly about plans which looked to be very impractical, that we could not forecast what would be attempted. Late in July a large number of armed Assyrians crossed into Syria; they were men who had left their families in villages behind them. We had always understood that there was no place in Syria where they would be allowed to settle, but their leaders at this time evidently assured them that a place would be found along the upper regions of the Khabur; there, in recent years, quite a number of Christian villages had been formed, peopled mainly with refugees from the Mardin region, and obviously to act as buffers along the Turkish frontier; it might be thought plausible that Assyrians would also be located in the region; but I think that the really important point is that the men who emigrated were of a mentality, and had so implicit an obedience to Mar Shimon that they would have gone anywhere on any pretext if he had ordered it. They totalled perhaps more than thirteen hundred men. The Syrian authorities blame Iraq for not having informed them more fully of the difficulties which the Assyrians had been causing. They (the Syrians,--it will be remembered under French protectorate) took the movement to be entirely peaceful, albeit somewhat irresponsible. As would be expected in such a case, they disarmed the wanderers; but when it was shown to the Assyrians that they were laboring under a delusion, and that no lands would be available for them in Syria, and they wished to return to Iraq, their arms were returned to them. It is not surprising that the Syrians have been charged with aiding rebels, and helping to embarrass Iraq; but their defense is that they had not been properly warned of the nature of the movement which was taking place.

Be that as it may, when the Assyrians got back to the Iraq border post, the patrols there had the impression that the returning host was largely disarmed. Their stay in Syria had been long enough that quite a force of the Arab army had been collected in the Peishkhabur area for the purpose of controlling a gang obviously capable of making trouble. In fact, there had been quite a strong concentration of troops in northern Iraq ever since Yakou had made his first little disturbances more than a month previously.

One group of perhaps five hundred Assyrians, came back to the border under the leadership of Yakou. It seems that the vast majority of them were not desperate, did not consider themselves outlaws, and were even peaceably minded. They merely thought that their exodus to Syria had failed to lead to a Promised Land; now they must return to Iraq, rejoin their families, and carry on as best they could at the old stand. Before them were Arab troops two of three thousand strong, besides bodies of police; and, while they had been led to consider themselves far superior fighters to those forces, it is doubtful if an appreciable number anticipated any engagement. But means were known whereby they could be drawn into engagement in an apparently natural manner. In the vanguard marched Yakou with about fifteen picked followers; when they reached the Iraq post, they purported to be preparing to surrender their arms and enter the country again in a far more obedient frame of mind than they had left it. But that vanguard opened fire on the Iraq troops! Of course the fire was returned; the Assyrians as a whole easily believed that the Arabs had started the fighting, and it immediately became general.

The Assyrians attacked with spirit and ability, but did not have the easy victory which they doubtless expected; the Arab army acquitted itself better than anyone had expected (some

arms to the Government officials. Someone is obviously much to blame for this slaughter of non-combatants, which even included a few women. I like to think (as there is strong reason to think) that it was a very small group, working by means unknown to higher Iraq authorities, and taking advantage of the presence of Arab and Kurdish looters of the most ignorant and ruffianly type. The great thing to be hoped is that this group will be brought to justice, so that the world will not tend to blame Iraq as a whole for the incident. Without condoning or excusing the terrible deed in any way, it cannot be said too often, however, that apparently it would never have happened had not matters been forced into such a distorted situation by the studied provocative policy of Mar Shimon.

Apparently public order is properly restored; we have reason to hope that there will be no further outbreaks, but there is still much to cause concern. Extreme tension developed all over Iraq. Muslims of the less responsible type began to mutter against all Christians as well as Assyrians in particular; looting occurred in many villages which were by no means exclusively Assyrian. Strenuous efforts on the part of the Government and the Muslim aristocracy are surely responsible in a large measure for preventing more general bloodshed. Good will which had been slowly and painstakingly built up in the years since the Great War has been sadly riddled and weakened. Mar Shimon has finally been deported, and is now in Cyprus; there are threats of discharging all Assyrians employed in Iraq; should these be carried out systematically, it will be a heavier blow in the long run than was the one massacre.

The Christians of Iraq, Assyrian and other sects alike, have become more cynical, less trustful, less willing to try to live as brethren with the Muslims. A severe storm has passed over the garden of Iraq, and it will be years before its scars can be overgrown.

Pray for the land, that justice be not lost from sight. That forbearance and even love be not lost, but regain their strength. Pray for the bereaved and distressed, of course; these events have increased them, and still more distress may occur if economic retaliation follows threats of physical violence. Pray for the Christians as a whole that they fall not away from their ideal of peacemakers, nor cease seeking first the Kingdom of God. For those Assyrians who conscientiously thought that obeying the Government was for their good, and have suffered thereby, that they may not lose all faith in God and man. Pray for those who have travestied the name of our religion by making it a cloak for political ends to be secured in the most heartless possible manner, that they may not be wholly reprobate, but come to know and manifest the love of Christ. Pray for us missionaries, that we may be forgiven if past neglect or shortcoming may have dulled our usefulness to humanity in this time of need. And that we may do more in the days to come, be they trying or peaceful.

The above does not claim to be scientifically accurate, but I believe that in matters of fact it is true in all important respects, and I hope that even the details are well-founded; in many cases one cannot be sure what the truth is in particular incidents. As to opinions expressed, I am entirely responsible for them; where they were not arrived at independently, they are chosen from other people's opinions to the best of my judgment.

This material is confidential and not for publication. I even ask that there be no publication of quotations from it in my name or that of our Mission or in any form where the writer might be easily identified.

Please feel free to show it to friends who are genuinely interested either in Iraq or the Assyrian people, or Oriental Christians in general, but do not let it pass into the hands of strangers.

In correspondence with any of us please use discretion in your statements, for it is likely that there will be censorship of outgoing and even incoming mail for some time to come. This will be posted by a friend outside Iraq, and therefore I have expressed myself more freely than I should have otherwise done.

Mr Trull has letter
for "Summer 1933" of
J. W. Willoughby - also
2 letters - Dec 7, 8 - from
E. W. McDowell -

Jan. 12, 1934

THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U. S. A.
156 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

MEMORANDUM

FROM

TO

February 14, 1924

Dr. Robert W. Speer,
156 Fifth Avenue,
New York City.

Dear Dr. Speer,

We leave here tomorrow morning for Liverpool to sail in the evening by the "City of Saida" of the Elderman Line. We got our passport back only day before yesterday. It was visced only after referring the matter to Bagdad. We had to pay for the cabling. We also had to subscribe to the condition imposed that the two ladies would be willing to withdraw from Mosul on request, of the authorities in case they considered it unsafe for them to remain. This included the Edwards who are now free to proceed to Mosul. The whole point of the delay apparently lay in a ruling that women were not to be allowed to go to Mosul under present conditions.

Let me report further on my errand here. I have had interviews with the following people interested in the matter of the protection of the Assyrians: The Archbishop of Canterbury; Mr. Oldham; Mr. Philip Kerr; Mr. H. Wilson Harris of the League of Nations Union; Sir John Spuckburgh and Mr. Hall of the Colonial Office; Sir Percy Cox and Dr. MacGullian.

On the whole I feel more optimistic than I did. The feeling seems to be prevalent that any withdrawal of the British is not imminent; steps had already been taken looking toward the safe guarding of the lives of the Christians, even considering the possibility of their following the British forces in the event of a withdrawal. It is most reassuring also to know that Sir Percy Cox, recently High Commissioner for Iraq, has been charged with the interests of the Assyrians in the negotiations with the Turkish Government over the question of the northern boundary of Iraq. These negotiations are now due but may be delayed by the Turks for several months and the whole matter may go into the League of Nations for a decision. This does not involve the withdrawal of the British.

Of course there is a sentiment in Bagdad demanding the immediate withdrawal of their forces from Mesopotamia and there is now a Labor Government. But those in a position to know assure me that there is little danger that the new government will press this matter. I have been told also that Mr. McDonald would be very sympathetic toward these Christian people.

On the other hand I have come to feel that there might be important advantages accrue to the Assyrians if in some way they could be brought under the wing of the League of Nations, especially if America joins it. I have therefore drawn up roughly a plan to this end. I enclose a copy of it for you to pass judgment upon it. I have endeavored to make it as little as possible obnoxious to the Moslem powers and on the other hand have had in view the largest benefit possible for the Assyrians in territory and the safeguarding of their lives and other interests.

The feature of the three residents offers, of course, great difficulties but I consider it of great importance to the plan. They would be the intermediary through which the League could exert its influence and authority. I have ventured to use this argument in favor of - not necessarily my plan but of some action on the part of the League of Nations looking toward the preservation of this small minority, viz: that

such action on the part of the League would predispose many people at home to consider favorably any action of our government that would us into close association with the League of Nations. This argument has seemed to appeal to all with whom I have used it; especially Sir Percy Cox, Mr. Harris and the secretary at the Colonial Office. I should have said that all these men have been most courteous and sympathetic and have manifested an interest in the Assyrians.

I took it upon myself to say to some of these men that I felt sure that you would be interested in the favorable consideration of some such plan as I have suggested and that you would use your good offices to forward such a matter, if it met the approval of the circle here who were nearest to the problem and more or less responsible for any steps taken for the preservation of the Assyrians.

One or two of them inquired whether the American government might possibly use its influence, perhaps indirectly, to induce the Turkish government to be generous in the matter of the northern boundary of Iraq which of course very materially affects the interests of our people. I gave a guarded answer to this, but expressed the opinion that if about that time the Turks were needing something very badly from the American people or government that, possibly, directly or indirectly such generosity to these people might be claimed as a condition of meeting their desires.

In view of the fact that there seems to be such an optimistic spirit here with reference to the persistence of the British in Mosul, I have not arranged with any one definitely to present this plan to the League of Nations or to press the matter. I have presented it to the group most interested in the Assyrians and if they find anything in it that will stand between this people and destruction it will be up to them to make use of it. This would refer, especially to the Archbishop, Sir Percy Cox and Mr. Harris.

If they do present the case of the people to the League of Nations, I am sure you will do all you can personally and through others to bring public sentiment to bear upon our government to do its part in this worthy cause. Perhaps the Near East Relief through its widespread organization might induce a general and influential petitioning of Congress by letters to consider the cause of these Christians as a factor in their attitude toward the League of Nations.

We have had a very pleasant visit here with Miss Martin who came a hundred miles to see us.

Very cordially,

(signed) S. W. McDowell.

A SUGGESTED PLAN
FOR THE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF THE ASSYRIAN CHRISTIANS IN THE
EVENT OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE BRITISH FROM MOSUL.

1. THE PEOPLE CONCERNED: THE ASSYRIAN CHRISTIANS:
A remnant of the ancient church of the East. Within the first few centuries preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout Asia - Mesopotamia, Persia, India and China; established noted schools, translated, multiplied and distributed the Scriptures together with commentaries on them; until the eighth century rivaled the church of the West in the number of its converts from heathenism, in its church organization, in its schools and in its Christian literature.

This church overwhelmed by the rising flood of Islam in the seventh century and following; all but annihilated because of its refusal to accept Islam; this small remnant found a refuge in the almost inaccessible valleys of central Kurdistan; for a thousand years, in the heart of those wild mountains, surrounded by hostile and fanatical Mohammedan Kurds and Turks they have remained steadfast in the Christian faith and have maintained a civilization higher than those of their neighbors around about them.

At the beginning of the war in spite of every effort to draw them to the side of the Central Powers, after full consideration of the cost, they definitely cast in their lot with the Allies and throughout the entire war served the Allied Cause with great courage and efficiency. Through the fortunes of war they suffered the loss of their ancestral homes, their property, and the lives of half their people; they were swept out of their country into exile and have been living the life of refugees until this present time.

THEIR LOCATION:

Their ancestral home in central Kurdistan; a circle with a radius of one hundred miles having its center at the town of Julamerk would enclose the heart of the Assyrian country and the majority of its people.

THEIR PRESENT LOCATION:

A line of villages, deserted by their former inhabitants from various causes, stretching along the Kacho-Dulak-Alra Line, the present indefinite northern border of Iraq, about forty or fifty miles north of the city of Mosul; a smaller part of them have pushed on into the foot hills of their own mountain district.

2. THE PERIL THAT THREATENS THESE ASSYRIAN PEOPLE:
From the time of their great flight in 1918 these people have been succored, fed and preserved by the British forces occupying Mesopotamia. In return for these great benefits their young men have given themselves for military service in guarding the northern borders of Iraq. Largely because of this service the Assyrians have drawn upon themselves the bitter animosity of Kurds, Arabs and Turks occupying that general territory. THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE BRITISH FORCES FROM MOSUL WOULD IMPERIL THE VERY EXISTENCE OF THE ASSYRIAN PEOPLE. Whether Arabs or Turks rule over them there will be imminent danger of massacres and forcible deportation, and sooner or later final extinction as a people. Their Moslem neighbors outnumber them many fold and hate them with bitter and fanatical hatred.

3. POSSIBILITIES OF ESCAPE FROM THE THREATENED PERIL.

- A. WHOLESALE EMIGRATION: Apparently only Argentina and Brazil are open to them. Many difficulties; deemed by many impracticable.
- B. UNAIDED SELF PROTECTION: Arm them and leave them to fight it out for themselves; Commit them to paper promises on the part of Arabs and Turks. Impossible: Past experiences have proved the worthlessness of such promises; the Assyrians themselves are independent and warlike, ready to resent injury

an insult, given to reprisals; occasions for conflict would inevitably arise between the two people; a weak government could not suppress these feuds and conflicts, would probably promote them. A plausible pretext for a war of extermination would easily be found. In spite of their valor the Assyrians would eventually be suppressed if not annihilated.

WITHOUT SOME OUTSIDE POWER THE PRESERVATION OF THE ASSYRIAN CHRISTIANS SEEMS TO BE IMPOSSIBLE.

C. SELF PROTECTION UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.
The plan suggested accepts this as a possibility.

4. THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PLAN.

1. The plan presupposes that Iraq and Turkey join the League of Nations.
2. It concedes sovereignty over the Christians to the Islamic power under which the Christians may be living, Arab or Turk.
3. It does not place any Moslem population under Christian domination.
4. It aims to provide safeguards for the lives, property and vital interests of the Christian population and establishes means for the preservation of peace and goodwill between Moslem and Christians dwelling together in the same territory.

THE ENLIGHTENED PLAN.

FOR THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

1. Fix the boundaries of the Assyrian people, to the full extent possible within their ancestral territory.
2. Organize from among the Assyrians an administrative body to have jurisdiction over Christians only.
3. Define the relationship of the Assyrians and their administrative body to the ruling powers.
4. Organize a police system under the authority of the Administrative Body for the maintenance of peace and order and with provision for its use in case of necessity for self protection.
5. Place its sanction upon three RESIDENTS TO BE CHOSEN FROM outside the Assyrians; one Moslem and two Christians.
THEIR RESIDENCE:
 - A. To be nominated by the League of Nations.
 - B. But subject to the veto of the Christian Administrative body and the ruling Moslem power.
 - C. THEIR PURPOSE: To work together to promote peace and goodwill.
To serve as reporters for the League of Nations to keep it informed as to conditions and needs.
To make known to the Administrative Body the will of the League of Nations.
To act when called upon to do so as mediators between the two classes of people.
6. THEIR POWERS: Only advisory, reportorial and mediative.
6. Arrange a system of finance to meet the expenses of the Administrative Body; the Police system and the Residents.
7. Provide for the freedom of the ecclesiastical organization in the practice of religion and in the education of the children.

Russell Carter

THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U. S. A.
156 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

MAY 25 1933

MEMORANDUM

FROM Mr. Carter

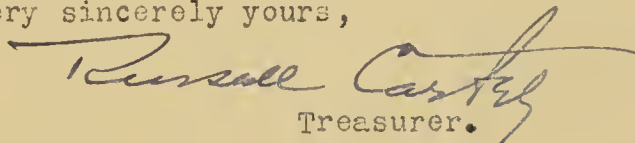
May 24th, 1933.

TO Dr. Speer

Dear Robert:-

In reply to your memorandum of May 15th regarding the \$23,475.06 standing over from the war time to be used for the benefit of the Assyrian people, may I say that we should be very glad to have this used as is determined to be best. My only question is as to whether it is wise even in confidential correspondence with these three men on the field to state that the sum represents Persian Money Orders which were never cashed. Perhaps you can refer to the credit in some other way.

Very sincerely yours,


Treasurer.

RC/GAC

To
The State Department,
Washington, D.C.

This memorandum is written at the suggestion of Mr. Dulles, Chief of the Near East Division of the Department of State.

Its purpose is to call attention to one of the small minorities of the Near East. They are a small body of Christians, called Assyrian and Nestorian, whose immemorial home has been in the region lying between Mosul in the west and Lake Urumia on the east. The Turko-Persian border divides them into two classes; those who have been until recently Turkish subjects and those who have been, and are, subjects of Persia.

This memorandum will refer to each of them in turn.

I. The Assyrian or Nestorian Christian community until recently subject to Turkey:

These people are highlanders dwelling for the greater part in the mountains of Kurdistan. They are a hardy race, lovers of freedom, and tenacious of their Christian faith. The religious and ecclesiastical leadership are combined in one man called Mar-Shimon, Patriarch, a hereditary title.

This entire region embraced between the Tigris River and the Persian Border opposite Mosul with its Moslem and Christian inhabitants came definitely under Turkish rule only as late as 1830. Before that time the government was vested in local chiefs called Begs, Amirs and Pashas. Mar-Shimon was one such local ruler, on a par with the others, regarded as inferior only because of the Christian faith of himself and people. According to the law of the Koran he and his people were required to pay a tax in token of their submission to Islamic rule. Aside from this tax their local autonomy was recognized by the neighboring Kurdish clans. These mountain Nestorians, or Assyrians, from time immemorial have been a local self-governing, political unit. Their submission to the Turkish government since 1830 has been largely nominal. No Turkish tax collectors have ever been allowed to enter the strictly Christian area of the mountains. Mar-Shimon has always personally collected the tax imposed and has personally turned it over to the nearest seat of Turkish government.

In 1914, after the beginning of the war, Mar Shimon, by order of the Turkish Government, was summoned to Van for conference with the Valli Pasha, the Governor of that province.

He was informed of the approaching participation of Turkey in the war on the side of the Central Powers and he was asked what his position would be in that case; would he join Turkey and side with the Central Powers or would he take side with Russia and England?

The writer for thirty-five years has made his home with these mountain people and has been on intimate personal relations with Mar Shimon. In all that is herein stated he speaks from personal knowledge.

Mar Shimon's answer to the Turkish Pasha was to the effect that in so important a matter he could make no alliance without first consulting his people. On his return to the mountains Mar Shimon called together his people in a large assembly and laid before them the offers of the Turkish Government as over against the offers and promises of Russia. The question was debated pro and con for two days at the end of which time a vote was taken and all but unanimously it was decided to cast in their lot with the Allies. Mar Shimon gave official answer to this effect to the Turkish Government, thus placing himself and people officially in a state of war against the Turkish Government and on the side of the Allies. Hostilities on a small scale began almost immediately between the Christians and

the Turks.

The Russians in behalf of the Allies from the beginning of the war had sought the support of these mountain clansmen as a protection to their left flank. A definite promise was made to them that in return for their military service they should receive final and complete independence from Turkish or Moslem domination.

A plan of campaign was agreed upon between the Russians and Mar Shimon as follows: The Russian and Assyrian forces were to form a junction near Julamerk in the Assyrian territory on a certain date. This territory was to be occupied conjointly by the two forces throughout the war, as the retention of this territory was of strategic importance.

Second, at the close of the war this district which had been the home of these people for twelve hundred years, was to be ceded to the Assyrian Christians as their permanent home in which they were to be autonomous.

This plan was carried out so far as forming a juncture of the two forces was concerned. The Assyrians fulfilled their obligations to the letter and were first to arrive at the rendezvous. On the arrival of the Russian troops there was great rejoicing among the Christians in the belief that their district was thereafter to be under Christian rule. But on the very day of their arrival the Russian commander informed the Christian leaders that he was under orders to withdraw his troops to their lines in Persia. The Christians protested that this was contrary to the agreement made; that it would leave them helpless in the hands of the Turks. The Russian commander insisted that he must return at once. The Christians asked that ammunition be given them in order to withstand the attacks of the Turks. This was refused them. In spite of the protestation of the Christians that this withdrawal of the Russian force would probably result in the destruction of the Christians by the Turks and Kurds the Russian forces were withdrawn. The withdrawal of the Russians seems to have been utterly unjustifiable.

The Russians withdrew and left the Assyrians to fight it out alone with the Turks and Kurds who promptly moved to the attack.

For four months these Christian highlanders maintained themselves against the overwhelming forces sent against them by the Turks. By the fall of 1915, however, they were compelled, for lack of food and ammunition, to give up the unequal struggle. With their women, children and flocks they withdrew from their mountain valleys, fighting their way step by step, until they crossed the Turkish border into Persia where they joined their fellow Nestorian Christians on the plains of Salmas and Urumia, within the lines of the Russian army.

By this retreat the Assyrians abandoned the district they had occupied as their home from almost the beginning of the Christian Era, thus losing homes, fields and their churches, some of which were a thousand years old and dearer to them than their own lives.

II. We turn now to the other branch of these Assyrians or Nestorian Christians, those who for many centuries had made their homes on the fertile plains along the shores of Lake Urumia.

These Christians acknowledged the headship of the Nestorian Patriarchs in Turkey, just across the border, but dwelling on the Persian side of the border they regarded themselves, and were so regarded, as subject to the Persian Shah.

These people were unarmed and without any natural defense. For many centuries their condition among the surrounding Moslems was that of abject serfdom.

With the coming of the American missionaries, some ninety years ago, their condition gradually improved until at the beginning of the war they were the most prosperous and most intelligent community in Persia.

In all this time they had never been in antagonism to the Persian Government and had never borne arms. They were simple-minded tillers of the soil, faithfully paying the taxes laid upon them.

The beginning of the war found the Russians in practical occupation of Northeast Persia, though the government was still nominally Persian. The Christians naturally rejoiced over the presence of their fellow religionists from Russia but still held their allegiance to Persia.

In January, 1915, an organized Turkish army entered the Urumia plain from the south. The Russians retired northward. Turks and Kurds and local Persians fell upon the subject Christians of the Urumia plain, looted and destroyed their villages and massacred the inoffensive inhabitants. Some ten thousand fled with the retreating Russians; twelve thousand took refuge with the American missionaries in the City of Urumia.

In May, five months later, the Russians returned and the Turks withdrew. The Christians returned to their homes still unarmed and as non-participants in the war.

In October, 1915, their fellow Nestorians of the mountains joined them on the Plains of Urumia, having been forced from their homes by the Turks.

The mountaineers having already declared themselves on the side of the Allies readily united with the Russian army. The plains people of Urumia as a body took no definite action but individuals to the number of several hundred joined the Russian army. These few hundred young men of the plain together with the mountaineers were organized into three battalions and rendered most efficient service in holding that frontier against the Turks.

The Christian community as a whole, however, maintained their allegiance to the Persian Government.

In 1917 the Russian Government fell and their army in Persia gradually disintegrated. In 1917 and 1918 the Germans appeared in Southern Russia; the Turkish army along the Persian border was strengthened; the Russian force in Persia had disappeared; the Persian Government while nominally neutral sympathized with the Central Powers and the Persian Moslems along the Turkish border openly joined hands with the Turks against the Christians. This constituted a situation of great peril to the Christians in the Province of Urumia.

A drive by the Germans and Turks down through Persia to Afghanistan and India was imminent. Such a movement would have involved the annihilation of these Nestorian Christians.

In the fall of 1917 there came to Urumia a British officer, personally known to the writer, who pointed out to the Christians the approaching movement and the imminence of their danger, and urged them to organize an army for their defense under the guidance of English and French officers. Incidentally this army would materially assist in diverting the drive toward Afghanistan and India.

The mountaineers welcomed such a step; the plains people deprecated it, realizing the position in which they would be placed as regards the Persians. The organization of this army was to be defensive and was to be directed against an aggressive movement on the part of the Turks and not against the Persian Government. But while the Persian Government was nominally neutral the local Persian population were actively supporting the Turks.

The people of Urumia therefore shrank from placing themselves in a position of antagonism to the local Moslem population with whom they would have to live.

But events proved to be too powerful to resist. The local Persian community themselves became aggressors against the Christians. At the very time \pm in 1918 when Mar Shimon was using his utmost endeavors to secure peace between the two elements the local Moslem leaders treacherously assassinated the Patriarch and later made an attempt to massacre the entire Christian population. This last was frustrated. The city fell into the hands of the Christians who magnanimously reinstated the Persian governor and divided the police force half and half with the Persian Moslems.

The entire Christian body, mountaineers and plains people, were thus forced to unite in organized forms under British and French officers for the purpose of protecting the entire Christian community from destruction.

They were assured of British aid in money and equipment and of reinforcement from the British army then operating in Mesopotamia. The British, however, were slow in fulfilling their promises and this small force of Christians, practically unaided, held this point on the line and defended their own community from the fall of 1917 till the summer of 1918, against the regular Turkish troops and Kurdish and Persian irregulars. Thirteen times the attacks of these forces were repulsed. But as time passed and the promised aid and reinforcement failed to appear, discouragement weakened the morale of the Assyrians. In July, 1918, a British detachment was reported as having arrived at Sain Kala, the rendezvous agreed upon, about one hundred miles south of Urumia. The Assyrian leader with a strong guard started out to meet them and to receive the needed supplies. Just at that juncture the Turks on the north were reinforced and moved on Urumia City. That line of defense gave way and retreated to the city. This with the news of the departure of their leader which was misconstrued as a flight precipitated a panic. In a few hours the entire Christian population numbering some 80,000 men, women and children were in flight to the south towards Sain Kala and Hamadan. They were followed closely by Kurdish and Persian irregulars who hung upon their flanks picking off stragglers and in particular places massacring thousands, carrying off women and children into captivity.

The disorganized, terror-stricken mass of refugees finally reached Sain Kala where the small body of British troops sent out to succor them rendered most commendable service in their behalf driving back the Kurdish and Persian irregulars and acting as an escort for the Christians from Sain Kala to Hamadan.

It is important to note at this point certain charges made against these refugees by the Persian Government, viz. that in their march from Sain Kala to Hamadan they had committed serious depredations on the Kurdish villages between Sain Kala and Hamadan.

A claim for reparation was presented to the British for these damages.

With reference to these charges the following points should be noted:

1. There is a certain measure of truth in the charges made. Some villages were plundered and partly burned.
2. But there was gross exaggeration in the charges made by the Persian Government. This Sain Kala road had been traversed and fought over several times during the war by the Turks and Russians. Most of the damage which appeared to the eye was done by these contingent armies and not by the refugees.
3. Not in extenuation but by way of explanation, it should be remembered that with this great mixed multitude were the remnant of the Assyrian army. These sold-

-iers were disorganized and out of hand of their officers; they were sore from defeat; and embittered by the attacks made upon them in their flight by Kurdish and Persian irregulars. In 1915 the Kurds of this very region had overrun the Urumia plain, looting, destroying, burning, killing and carrying off women and children; many of their women were still in the hands of these very Kurds. They remembered these things. They had lost all, were hungry and being armed and mounted is it strange that they made reprisals upon their enemies? Would they not have been of much superior civilization than the English or Americans if they had refrained from reprisals?

The Persians themselves acknowledge that their women did not suffer at the hands of the refugees.

4. Very little if any of these depredations were committed by the plains-people of Urumia. Most of it was done by the wilder mountaineers and by irresponsible stragglers from Russia.

At Hamadan the refugees were taken in charge by the British military who gathered them into a well organized camp at Bakuba, thirty three miles northeast of Bagdad. Here they were well cared for by the English Government. Our American Near East Relief supplementing their efforts by grants of clothing and bedding and by special service along several other lines.

The writer and his wife were with the refugees during their camp life from 1918 to 1922.

In 1920 at the time of the general uprising in Irak against the English, there was a combined attack by Arabs and Kurds on the refugee camp at Bakuba. An easy victory was anticipated following which this strong force of some six or seven thousand Arabs and Kurds were to join in the general attack on Bagdad.

Only the presence of the Assyrian and Armenian young men who had seen service along the Urumia frontier saved the camp from destruction, and the check given to this strong force of Arabs and Kurds was undoubtedly an important factor in saving the English position in Bagdad.

The British armed the refugees at the beginning of the attack and for fifteen days they bore the brunt of the fighting as the British regulars, except for five machine guns, were drawn off for the defense of Bagdad. The Arabs and Kurds were finally defeated and driven off. They never reached Bagdad, thanks to the splendid fighting qualities of the Assyrians and Armenians.

During 1919 to 1922 the British made large use of these Assyrian and Armenian soldiers in defense of their position above Mosul.

In September 1920 immediately following the attack upon the camp of Bakuba, the camp was broken up, the Armenians being transferred to Mahrumar near Busra and the Assyrians to a new camp at Mindan near Mosul.

That same fall of 1920 the British encouraged the Assyrian refugees to make an effort to repatriate themselves. This courageous movement was foredoomed to failure because of the lateness of the season and the deep snows which had already closed the high passes.

The delay in making this movement was due to the Arab and Kurdish uprising. But the failure of the movement may properly be charged to British mismanagement and lack of good faith with the refugees themselves.

Following this collapse of the repatriation movement the camp at Minda was broken up. A generous dismissal grant was made by the camp authorities and the camp was evacuated.

Here again the fortunes of the two sections of the Assyrian people must be followed separately.

1. The Persian Assyrians.

These people are passionately attached to their ancestral homes on the beautiful plains of Urumia.

During the entire period of their detention at Rakuba they continually beset the English authorities to restore them to their homes regardless of conditions. In 1921 when an effort was made to enroll all the young men of the camp in the British army the mountaineers readily acquiesced but the Persian Assyrians made very strong objections to enrollment on the ground that the terms they were required to sign obligated them to go wherever they were sent, and that for a term of years. They expressed willingness to sign up for the purpose of self-defense of their community and only until they were repatriated. Their one thought and determination was to get back home at the very earliest moment.

These Urumians, immediately on their release from the Minda camp, turned their faces homeward. They repudiated all their recent leaders and their counsels for delay. Thus began one of the strangest and most pathetic movements in history. Seized and moved by a national home sickness these thousands of refugees without a head and without taking counsel of one another poured out of the camp and set out on the long, hot and dangerous road over the desert from Mosul to Bagdad, the first stage on their way home to Persia. They were warned by their more educated leaders that they would fall by the way at the hands of Arabs and Kurds and at the end of their long and toilsome journey they would find only a closed door they would not be allowed to enter Urumia. Their only answer, made with uncanny quietness of demeanor and a peculiar smile on their faces was, "We are going home. It is better to die on the road than to remain longer in the land of strangers."

Scarcely stopping in Bagdad they streamed through the city on their way to the Persian border. The Persian Consul in Bagdad placed no obstacles in their way.

At the border the Persian authorities at first permitted them to pass freely until some few thousand had crossed over to their promised Land of Persia.

Suddenly orders were issued in Teheran prohibiting further entrance of the refugees and turning back as many as possible of those who had succeeded in crossing the border.

No reason was given for this unexpected order but it became evident that it was due to false statements made by interested parties who were opposed to their return. A thousand heart broken men, women and children were held up at the border unable either to go forward or to return. Several thousand camped by the road side in Bagdad hoping against hope that new orders would be issued permitting them to proceed.

It had been falsely represented at Teheran that these returning refugees were the mountaineer Assyrians of Turkish citizenship; that they were armed and were proposing to make a settlement in Urumia by force of arms.

When the government in Teheran was once persuaded that these people were Persian subjects; of the peasant class, unarmed and composed largely of women and children, the prohibitive order was rescinded and the people were allowed again to enter but only on condition that they would not proceed as far as Urumia.

The movement was resumed and a few thousand of the refugees got as far as Tabriz the point nearest Urumia where they have been befriended by the Near East Relief workers and American missionaries. Several thousand were induced to settle temporarily in villages around Hamadan and Kermanshah. Perhaps three thousand remained in the City of Bagdad where they are earning their living but still long to return to their vineyards and fields in Urumia.

Before the war several thousand of these Urumia Assyrians had migrated to America where they have prospered. During this period of refugee life they have contributed most generously to the support of their destitute friends and relatives. In the spring of 1921 after the failure of the repatriation movement they sent large remittances for the passage to America of their friends. The sum total of these remittances has amounted to nearly \$800,000.

This emigration movement continued until the passing of the 3% immigration law in the summer of 1921.

During the two succeeding years of 1921 and 1922 the situation of these exiled people has changed but little. They still occupy the three centers:- Bagdad, where they are showing themselves to be industrious, law abiding and fairly successful in earning a living under most difficult circumstances, - Hamadan and Kermanshah - where with little or no aid from the Relief Committee they have been wringing a precarious existence out of untoward conditions -

Tabriz - close by Urumia. Here they have suffered most from hunger and general destitution.

Last fall in October and November, 1922, those in Tabriz driven to desperation by hunger and long deferred hope made overture to the Persian Government in Tabriz looking toward their return to Urumia.

At first the Government showed itself favorable to their request and those in Tabriz began their return in small bands. As word of this movement spread to Hamadan and Kermanshah the procession swelled until three or four thousand of the exiles were restored to their homes, or rather to the ruins of what was once their homes. And even in the midst of the desolation of ruined villages the home sick exiles rejoiced to see again their native land. Aided somewhat by the Near East Relief they threw themselves most industriously into the work of rehabilitating their homes and resuscitating their fields and vineyards. Their Moslem neighbors with whom they had lived on good terms for many generations welcomed them back in some cases with tears of joy for they too had suffered greatly and in this community of suffering enmity had disappeared. The Moslem landed gentry also welcomed them because of their need of labor in restoring their own farms and vineyards. Likewise the commercial classes in the city who saw in the return of the Christians the end of the long stagnation of business and the hope of the old time prosperity.

But while these several classes welcomed the return of the Christians there were others, some in high places because of selfish interests at stake and others of the rabble from love of plunder and still others from among the ecclesiastics who were moved by fanatical bigotry, who were strongly antagonistic to the restoration of these Christians to the plains of Urumia and Salmas.

So it was not altogether unexpected when early in 1923 orders were issued in Teheran closing the doors again to these unfortunate exiles. No more were allowed to enter and those there were not allowed to leave. Such is the situation as it stands today.

Nine years ago these Urumia Christians constituted the most prosperous community in Persia and they were as loyal to the government as were the Persians themselves. In all their history, they had never borne arms and had never antagonized the government. They were a peaceable, industrious people, tilling the soil, paying their taxes, harming no one. They were one of the chief sources of revenue to the state.

Then came the war. In their weakness they fell victim to it. On the one side they were attacked by Moslem forces whom they had never injured or antagonized. On the other side were Christian powers who offered protection and freedom in return for their military assistance in the great struggle. This military assistance was rendered fully and faithfully and at the cost of all they possessed in property and to half of their population in lives. In rendering this service they never took the offensive against the Persian Government. Their only fighting was against an aggressive Turkish enemy and against irregular Persians who were violating their neutrality. In all that was done they were under compulsion by mighty powers against which they were impotent to contend.

For almost nine years they have been the helpless plaything of fate. They themselves harmless and faithful to their pledges, others have deceived them and exploited them. Their men have been massacred, their women have been ravished and carried into captivity. The entire population has been driven into exile and for five years they have lived the life of the damned in refugee camps dependent upon a cold charity for a meagre subsistence, bandied about from pillar to post.

When human nature could no longer endure they fled from their friends and sought to return to their own home land on the plains of Urumia and Salmas. And these plains were truly their home land; they have occupied them from the time of Zoroaster and they are as truly native to the soil as the Persians themselves.

And now at the end of the long and terrible trail they are denied the right of asylum in their own land.

All they ask is the privilege of creating a shelter for themselves amid the ruins of their old homes; to recover their fields and vineyards from the thistles and weeds that have overgrown them; to live quiet lives of thrift and industry; to become again loyal and productive subjects of Persia, a source of revenue to the state and a bulwark against its enemies on the west.

Against so reasonable and righteous a plea what opposition could be made?

As has been stated several large Moslem groups in the Urumia district have welcomed their return. The government itself when rightly informed is favorable to their return. But there is a hostile and actively antagonistic element among the ecclesiastics who are using their influence to prevent the restoration of this fruitful district of Urumia and Salmas to the Christians.

But this element alone would not be able to prevent the return of the exiles to their homes. There is another factor which has entered into the problem in opposition to the Christians and which explains the present deadlock in the movement back to Urumia - the Turk.

To understand this, reference must be made to the Turkish claim upon Mosul and the possible conflict between the Turks and the British over this claim.

The Turks have a strong force to the north of Mosul ready to strike when the time comes. But they desire also to attack from the south using the towns of Kulemania, Kerkuk and Rawan Juz as bases. The only approach to these places lies thru the plains of Salmas and Urumia. During the last two years the Turks have been using this highway in sending small bands of troops to harass the English forces to the south of Mosul, creating disturbances and even occupying the towns mentioned and thus threatening Mosul.

It is very evident that the Turks would regard the return of the Christians in any large number to Urumia and Salmas as inimical to their plans as touching Mosul. Their line of communication to the south of Mosul, they would reason, would be endangered. The more so, it would seem to them, that three or four thousand of the dreaded mountaineer Assyrians were regularly enlisted in the British army and were guarding Mosul against the approach of the Turks from the north. What more natural, they would reason, than the cooperation between these two bodies of Christians for the closing of the Urumia highway to the Turkish forces. It may be said paranthetically that there is very little likelihood of any concerted movement between these two bodies. They are totally separate in their characteristics and in their aspirations. From their experiences during the war they have come to entertain a most hearty dislike and suspicion of each other.

The Turks have an influential legation in Teheran. It is said that the Turkish Legation is the source of the strong opposition to the return of the Christian refugees to Urumia and Salmas. This is very probable.

On the other hand it should be recognized by the Persian Government that the whole of the northwest province of Persia is in danger of being lost to them.

First through the Turks. Just before the war the Turks laid claim to a large portion of this province including Urumia and Salmas and had practically occupied this part of the district in pursuit of their claim.

It is to be expected that this claim will be renewed as soon as conditions justify it. As has been seen these plains are essential to them as a military highway from Van to the southern part of the Mosul Vilayet and to Bagdad.

Second through the Kurds. The Kurds are seeking to establish a separate state for themselves. In this endeavor they are seeking to unite the Shiah Kurds of Persia and as is well known Urumia and Salmas are included in their plans.

Thus through either one or both of these political movements the whole of the northwest of Persia, the most fruitful province in all Persia and one of her chief revenue producers, is in danger of being lost to the Persian Government.

The Teheran Government should be made to realize that the presence of the Christians in force in Urumia and Salmas far from being a menace to them is rather a powerful asset to their political integrity and prosperity.

They have been loyal in the past. More than ever they will be loyal to Persia in the future.

The broken promises of the European powers, all they have lost and suffered through these powers have forever disillusioned them.

They cherish no false hopes of national independence. Their interests are tied up with the interests of Persia. They are a kindred people with the Persians. The Persians in their new aspirations for an honorable place among the nations of the earth will find in these subject Christian Assyrians kindred spirits who will be loyal to them, a source of material prosperity and a defense against their enemies.

To assure this the Persians would only have to deal sympathetically with these people now in the day of their need and in the future exercise justice and generosity toward them in all governmental relations.

Inasmuch as America is held in such high esteem by the Persians, is so necessary to them for financial and advisory assistance, is it too much to hope that the state department, through legitimate and proper channels, should use its good offices to secure from the Persian Government an open door for the repatriation of their exiled subjects and a generous treatment in their efforts for rehabilitation? In doing thus, the Persians would approve themselves before the world as a nation of high standards and far-seeing statesmanship.

II. The Mountain Assyrians.

These people, as has been said, have their homes in the mountains of Kurdistan on the Turkish side of the border to the northeast of Mosul. Hence when the camp at Mindan was broken up there were only a few days caravan journey from their native hills. These hills, however, were in the hands of the Turks and Kurds as the armistice had halted the British forces just to the south of them. This prevented the British from taking open steps toward the repatriation of the mountaineers.

After the dispersion of the camp the authorities gave to the refugees a dismissal allowance in cash, seed and cattle and located them temporarily in empty villages along the northern boundary of their mandate line, known as the Zacho-Duhuk-Akra line. This boundary line is about fifty miles north of Mosul and extends from Zacho, near Jezireh Ibn Omar on the Tigris, eastward through Duhuk through Akra on the Zab River. Chargeable perhaps to the contractors much of the seed proved bad; many of the cattle were unfit for plowing; in some cases, not all, the people ate their seed and cattle. The villages given the refugees proved to be hot beds of malaria and in a few months ninety-nine percent of them, according to the official reports of the British physicians, were prostrated by an epidemic of malignant malaria; many died and those survived were for months incapacitated for work. The Near East Relief again through its agents rendered valuable assistance in cooperation with the British in combating the epidemic and in caring for the destitute.

Little by little those whose villages lay nearest to the British lines, impelled by destitution and home sickness, ventured across into No Man's Land and reoccupied their former homes. A few thousand up to the present have thus repatriated themselves and become independent of aid. That whole area, however, is strongly Kurdish and two days march is as far as it is safe for the refugees to venture beyond the British lines. Thus the greater part of the mountaineers are still living as refugees on the malarious plains of Mosul and almost in sight of their own lofty mountain peaks.

The area to the north and east of Mosul is Kurdish country and contains several strong tribes who had been only partially subdued by the Turks. These tribes resented the approach of the British and from the armistice up to the present time have made guerrilla warfare against them. The Assyrians, being renowned as fighters and adapted to just such conditions, as soon as they arrived in the refugee camp at Bakuba in 1918 and 1919 were pressed into police service by the British along the northern border. In this capacity under British officers they quelled several uprisings among these Kurds, repeatedly defeating them in battle. In 1921 on the break up of the Mindan camp three to four thousand of the Assyrians were regularly enlisted in the British army as native levies. In this service they have proved their superiority over both Arabs and Kurds and have won high praise from their English officers. But the very fact that the Assyrians had aided the British in suppressing these Kurds has thoroughly antagonized all the Moslems of that area, Arabs, Kurds and especially the Turks. This bitter hatred on the part of the Moslems of that region against the mountain people is the very serious factor in the problem of safeguarding the whole Christian community.

Associated with this deep rooted enmity of the Moslems to the mountaineers is the ominous fact that the British are about to withdraw their forces from Mosul. Immediately the question arises: In the face of such enmity what will be the fate of the whole Christian community after the withdrawal of the English?

At this point it is necessary to call attention to the two classes of Christians in the Mosul area.

First, the refugee class - namely, the mountaineers who have been under consideration.

second, the resident Christians, those living in the City of Mosul and in large villages on the plain just outside of the city. These number in the neighborhood of fifty thousand. These Mosul Christians remained in their homes during the war and were practically unmolested, this being due to local conditions. There has never been any complication between these resident Christians and the Turkish Government. Both these classes of Christians are to be taken into consideration in dealing with the minority problem of the Mosul area.

So long as the British are in Mosul exercising their mandatory duties, even in the mildest form, these Christian communities will dwell in safety, so far as they are living within the British lines. If the British withdraw and Mosul again falls into the hands of the Turks these Christian communities will be placed in imminent peril.

As regards the resident Christians it is a question whether or not they would be molested. The local Moslem sentiment of the City of Mosul would be favorable toward them. What the attitude of the Turks would be toward them is uncertain. The inclination of the Turkish Government would naturally be to treat them as they are now treating the Christians in Hardin, just to the north of Mosul, and Asia Minor as a whole which would be harsh enough; possibly so harshly as to place the Mosul community on the list of evicted Christians for whom homes would have to be provided outside of the Turkish dominions.

The case of the refugee Christians - that is the mountain Assyrians - is entirely different. Beyond all doubt for them the coming of the Turk to Mosul would involve the usual massacre followed by deportation. This for the reasons already stated: their effective service in behalf of the Allies against the Turks during the war; and since the war their effective police service for the British in which they so often punished the Kurds and Arabs; and third the fear the Turks have of these warlike mountaineers. It is not possible that the Turks would consent to leave so strong a body of Christians in that neighborhood. These causes have created an intensely hostile spirit on the part of all the Moslems in that region against these Assyrian Highlanders, a hostility however mixed with fear. It is a foregone conclusion that the most extreme measures will be taken against this group both for the sake of revenge and in order to remove what the Turks would consider a dangerous element.

It is generally accepted that the British forces are to be withdrawn from Mosul. How soon is uncertain. Recent letters from Mosul indicate that the Assyrians are anticipating the withdrawal of the British forces within two or three years and they are quite concerned as to their fate. Many of them have given up hope of ever being able to return to their homes in the hills and are desiring to emigrate to some other part of the world. The smaller number, the more warlike including those now under arms in the British service, assert their ability to protect themselves in their valleys by force of arms only asking that they first be established there and that their boundaries be fixed by an adequately guaranteed treaty.

This brings the narrative relating to the mountaineer Christians up to date.

summary

1. The mountain Assyrians have a right to their home lands based on aboriginal occupation; there are no national boundaries, property rights being individualistic. The land is held by individuals in fee simple.

2. At the beginning of the war they officially placed themselves on the side of the Allies. In this they were governed in part by moral standards; in part by personal considerations hoping through alliance to achieve deliverance from oppressive Turkish domination and to become a self-governing community.

3. Both Russians and English encouraged them to take this step and made promises to them of political independence in return for their military service.

4. The Assyrians fulfilled their military obligations with faithfulness and efficiency.

5. Both Russians and English, in varying degrees, made large use of the military power of these people but repeatedly failed in their obligations to them.

6. As a result of the war and the failure of these two powers to fulfill their obligations to them the Assyrians suffered the loss of all they possessed - lands, homes, property and their ancestral places of worship so especially dear to them - and the lives of half their population. Driven out of their territory in 1915 they have lived as refugees for eight years, moved about from pillar to post, poorly housed, underfed, and largely deprived of freedom of movement. During this time they have been frequently attacked by Turks and irregular Kurds and Persians and several times they have seen the more defenseless portion of their people massacred and plundered. Their patriarch was most treacherously assassinated by a Ismael Agha of Salmas, who was instigated thereto, it is asserted, by Persian notables of that district.

During these eight years of exile and of sufferings and what they have considered wrong treatment, they faithfully adhered to the allied cause and have given continuous and effective military service first for the allied cause and later for the British in particular.

7. Today, four years after the Armistice, they are, with small exception, still refugees from their homes, living in want and discomfort, slowly perishing from malaria and other diseases.

8. The impending withdrawal of the British forces from Mosul threatens them with final extinction by massacre and deportation.

Inquiries.

1. What is the political status of this small minority?

2. Is it possible, through any of the great powers, including America, to secure these people such political rights as will enable them to have restored to them their country and to maintain them therein in safety?

3. If it is not practicable to restore these people to their own homes is there any possible action that can be taken by the governments concerned looking toward their settlement elsewhere?

4. If they cannot be restored to their own country and no provision can be made for their settlement as a colony elsewhere is there any other alternative than to leave them to remain where they are to suffer massacre and deportation?

5. In all human probability events will move forward to a compulsory immigration of the Assyrians. Who will determine whither?

6. Will it be wiser to allow events to take their course until these people are suddenly evicted by the Turks and then meet the question of where they are to be located and how they are to be transported? or will it be possible to take up the question of their future at this present time with the English and the Turkish Governments in endeavor to find a solution that will enable them to remain in their own country but with such safeguards thrown about them that they shall have no further fear of molestation or unjust treatment?

(signed) E. V. McDowell

(Copy to Dr. Speer)

Return to ...

R. E. ...

SEP 22 1932

The Indigenous Church of Urumia, Persia.

Ans. _____

The "Syrian Evangelical Church" in the beginning of its history drew most of its members from the Old Nestorian Church .

It was at the Council of Ephesus in 431 A. D., that Nestorius of Antioch, Bishop of Constantinople, was condemned for his alleged heretical opinions concerning the person of Christ.

The " Church of the East" with headquarters at Seleucia - Ctesiphon took up his cause and was later cut off from Communion with the " Western Church". The Nestorian Church was for a time free from persecution, flourished and spread rapidly. In the latter part of the fifth century, Nestorianism was accepted as the religion of the Christian Church in Persia. It became the largest Church then existing and was famed for its missionary zeal and for its schools, from which it sent out missionaries into many lands. Cosmas, a Christian traveller a hundred years before Mohammed, says that the Nestorian Church was sending missionaries to preach the Gospel to, "Bactrians, Huns, Persians, Indians, Armenians, Medes, and Elamites, and in the whole country of Persia the churches and bishops are without number." Numerous churches were scattered throughout Persia from the Gulf of Persia to the Caspian Sea. There were persecutions, but the Church thrived. In the middle of the sixth century the Persian Government recognized Christianity -to be tolerated but not to proselyte.

At the close of the fourteenth century came Tamerlane, the scourge of destruction, and he about succeeded in his determination to exterminate the churches of Persia. Many Christians fled for refuge to the mountains of Kurdistan. Long afterwards some of these ventured down into the plains of Urumia and Salmas, where they lived for centuries as a despised and persecuted sect under Mohammedan rule .

When the Nestorian Church was divided, the larger part of those living Kurdistan and north-west Persia accepted Mar Shimmon as their Patriarch with the Patriarchate at Kochannis, a village in Kurdistan.

Nearly a hundred years ago when Protestant Missions were begun in the Urumia region, there were only about one hundred and fifty thousand Nestorians, or Syrians, left. Of these about eighty thousand were living among a million Kurds in Kurdistan, thirty thousand were living around Urumia Lake, and forty thousand who had become Roman Catholics were living along the Tigris with the Patriarchate near Mosul. These were of the " Uniat Chaldean Church".

The people are called Syrians and are supposed to be descendants of the ancient Semitic peoples of Assyria and Chaldea. Their language is the Syriac, Their ancient language is the Syriac of the " Pshitta Bible" and closely allied to the Aramaic language spoken by the Jews of Palestine in the time of Our Lord.

A hundred years ago, their once sturdy and living Faith, had lost its power and had degenerated into mere formalism. The Church was dead and its priesthood ignorant and degraded. The purpose of the Mission in the first years was to revive and spiritualize the Old Church without interfering with its organization. Twenty years of effort proved this impossible. There was no life to revive, yet they had kept the form of the Faith in its original purity, to a larger degree than any other Oriental Church, clinging reverently to their Bible as the Word of God.

As converts were won to a spiritual faith, they were persecuted, denied the sacraments, and often driven out of the Old Church. The organization of the Evangelical Church came about gradually, for neither the missionaries nor the native leaders wished a separation. Rev. Wm. A. Shedd wrote, "The separation came about at length for the following reasons; (1) The Patriarch at first friendly, did all in his power to destroy the evangelical work and to compel the spiritually minded to quit his fold. (2) The converts could not long accept the unscriptural practices which prevailed and for which there were no available methods of discipline or reform. (3) The converts asked for better care and instruction and means of grace than were found in the dead language and rituals of the Old Church. The separation was not a violent disruption. The converts were at first invited to unite with the missionaries in the Lord's Supper. As the village converts increased in strength, pastors were placed over them. In time these village pastors and other laborers in reform - bishops, presbyters, and deacons - met in conference with the missionaries and adopted a simple confession of faith with a form of government and rules of discipline."

The first congregations were formed in 1855 with 158 members. The first conference, or knusha, was held in 1862. The rules then adopted, were enlarged in 1878 and again in 1887.

In 1909, after more than half a century of separation, the question of the union of the two churches was raised and caused much discussion. The Evangelical Church members were largely from the Urumia Plain, though there were a number of Evangelical Churches organized among the Syrians of Kurdistan. The members of the Nestorian Church were chiefly in the mountains. The hope from such a union was the Old Church might be spiritualized and revived by the spread of evangelical principles and that the Evangelical Church might find a larger field and greater opportunity for preaching evangelical truth in the larger organization. The decision of the question of unity rested with the two bodies concerned and the matter ended with the agreement that the Evangelicals should be allowed to preach in Nestorian churches with the understanding that they would not attempt to form new churches among the Nestorians of Kurdistan.

At the time of its organization, many Nestorians entered the Reformed Church. Among them was the brother of the former Patriarch, seventy priests, or kashas, three bishops, and a large number of deacons.

almost

Persecution was severe from the beginning. The Old Church was intolerant, and its priests and bishops were frequently influential enough to get co-operation from the Governor. In 1842 an order was issued that no Christian should be permitted to change from one sect to another. This order was rescinded in 1851, but at the same time an effort was made to nullify evangelical influence. The Urumia Governor who was assisting in this persecution, was killed by a Kurd, and the Governor-general of Tabriz who was supporting him, was driven out.

Kurd, and the Governor-General at Tabriz, ~~xxxxxxixxxxx~~ who was supporting him, was driven out, and the opposition stopped for a time.

The Evangelical Church was organized with four knushas, or presbyteries, three of these were in Urumia, one on each river, and the fourth was in Turkey among the converts there. Its officers were pastors, elders and deacons.

Rev. John H. Shedd was chiefly instrumental in perfecting the organization of the Church. The executive body was the "Evangelistic Board" of nine members chosen by the General Knusha. There was a "Board of Education", three chosen from each ~~xxxxxxixxxxx~~ section, or river, for oversight of the village Church schools, at times as many as one hundred of them, including those in Kurdistan. The "Legal Board" had oversight of such matters as are usually managed by bishops in Oriental churches. It also settled legal cases between Christians and so prevented them getting into the Persian Courts, causing endless trouble, and bringing disgrace upon the Church. The Station was represented on these Board by one or two members without a vote, and reserved the right of veto in certain cases.

Referring to the Legal Board, ~~xxxxxxixxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxixxxxx~~ in 1898, at the request of Dr. J.P. Cochran, ~~St~~, an order was issued by the provincial authorities, including the representative of the Foreign Office, and the Crown Prince, who represented the Shah in Azerbaijan, giving full legal rights to it to adjudicate matters in the Protestant Church. Thus the "Legal Board" was formally recognized by the Persian Government. Criminal cases were settled in the civil courts, but all sorts of cases between Christians were settled in this Church Court and the decision of the "Legal Board" was accepted as final by Persian authorities.

"The fundamental reason for this remarkable state of things," wrote Wm. A. Shedd, "is that Eastern jurisprudence in general and Moslem jurisprudence in particular, regard Law as a religious institution, and so accept as binding within the bounds of each religious community, the peculiar laws of that community. Divorce and inheritance are generally regarded as subjects amenable to religious law. So we had here to constitute a Church Court. The appeal in any case where coercion must be used, is necessarily to the Civil Court."

Later a code of rules regulating marriage and divorce based on the Nestorian Sunhadis, or book of Church Government, was adopted by the Evangelical Church.

Said Wm. A. Shedd, "The history of this reformation is one of the most intensely interesting anywhere on record in missionary annals. It has been the spread of Pentecostal power penetrating hundreds of villages. Out of it might be written many chapters of thrilling incidents, illustrating the work of the Holy Spirit, convincing of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and chapters of remarkable providence in ordinary labors in revivals; also during the prevalence of pestilence and famine and war!"

Dr. Perkins wrote a long time ago, "Heaven will not know any higher joy than the joy of redeemed Nestorians in the presence of their Saviour."

Revivals have been of frequent occurrence through the

Revivals have been of frequent occurrence through the history of the Church. Let one of the students of the early years speak, "The blessed Stoddard called me to him at the close of that Sabbath day. We boys in his school had been unusually reckless in our conduct that day. I was a candidate for bishop's orders and a leader in hilarity. Calling me to him he said, 'with a grieved look and sadness in his voice yet in touching kindness,' Bishop, how long will you thus harden yourself against God?" As he went on my heart was moved as never before. He prayed with me, and I went out in a state of mind wholly new to me. Others were talked with that same evening. We had no knowledge at that time of what conversion was or of the power of the Holy Spirit. That night we gave ourselves to prayer and could not sleep. A conviction of sin we had never before felt filled our souls and drove away sleep.

Then it was that we learned of the Holy Spirit's effectual working."

In 1871 there was a revival in the Degala Church with more than twenty conversions. In Hassan, a mountain district, the young bishop, Mar Yosip, who was pastor there reported, "The first two days of the Week of Prayer we spent in fasting and special prayer. I believe that God for the sake of His dear Son, heard our voice, for we are witnessing an awakening beyond our faith and expectation, hard hearts melted, the tears of sinners and the joy of converts, Not only in the place of a meeting, but through the village, is heard the voice of prayer and weeping in many houses until the morning. Another surprising thing is the rising of persons in the congregation confessing their sins, revealing secret faults, acknowledging theft and while asking pardon, offering restitution. One young man gave his dagger to the Gospel treasury, being unable to discover the owner of an article he had stolen long ago.

About twenty persons are beginning a new life. About one hundred and fifty persons assemble every night and the place cannot hold them. Some sit in the doorway and some outside in the cold."

In 1876 at a Communion service at the College one boy after another spoke witnessing to the work of the Spirit." They continued the meeting for six hours, forgetting that they had not eaten bread." A Week of Prayer followed and two hundred and forty-one were added to the Church.

Ten years later seventeen congregations were stirred with five hundred inquirers, the work being conducted almost entirely by native pastors. The Spirit of the Lord was present in power. The churches could not hold the crowds. Backsliders returned, quarrels were made up, confessions were publicly made, drunkards repented. The children were aroused and in one place a band of them went from house to house, singing hymns reading Scripture and praying. The additions to the Churches were two hundred and eighty-six that year.

At another time, the "Persia Inner Mission" was formed by Syrians with the purpose of making themselves responsible for the work of evangelization. In 1890 a group of young men formed the "Oshanna Band" and went out as evangelists at their own expense. Later they chose one of their own number as evangelist and paid his salary. Following the revival of 1890, sixty were added to the Church. The next year twenty congregations were stirred into new life. There were times through the years when the Spirit came in power upon the schools and scores of the young consecrated their lives to Christ.

About twenty-five years ago M. Franssen, a Swedish evangelist, visited Urumia. He preached in the schools in the city and in a number of the churches. Where ever he went, the Fire fell and the Church was on her knees.

The Evangelical Church has been a burning light in all this region and has sent her men into distant places. Some were early sent to Bohtan, two hundred miles away on the Tigris, and others to several mountain districts. These lighted the torch which set whole villages aflame, and later these villages became the centers of evangelical church life. The foundations of the work in Salmas, Tabriz, Maragha, and Hamadan were laid by Urumia preachers.

Benjamin Badal was for many years the brave, zealous, and much enduring colporteur of the B. & F. B. S. in Southern Persia often hazarding his life for the sake of his Master.

A more noted Urumia evangelist was Pastor Jacob Dillikoff who spent nearly forty years travelling about Russia as the apostle of evangelical truth, in connection with the great revival of the Synodist Movement. He laid down his life in Siberia whither he had gone to preach the Gospel under hardships which he was unable to bear.

In more recent years, there was Rabi Yakob of Geogtapa who spent many years as a Moslem evangelist. Rev. F. N. Jessup wrote of him. "Rabi Yakob was ready to learn from any one. Noticing what a wide hearing the wandering dervishes gain as they narrate in a singsong tone long poems about the imams and Persian heroes, he composed many similar poems telling the life of Christ and the apostles and explaining the way of salvation. He found these were listened to with great interest by the common people, and has had dervishes ask to learn them from him. Alas, I fear they have not been preserved. Asked once what he did when he found the crowd growing angry and threatening under the truth, he replied that he usually told them some Old Testament story. David and Goliath or Daniel in the lion's den would interest and ~~disarm~~ quiet the crowd and disarm anger. ----- He died in harness. A few hours before his death, when he could no longer speak much, he pointed upwards, smiling, saying, 'Heaven, Heaven. I am ready. I am ready!'"

Rabi Yosip Sayad, as evangelist for Moslems laid down his life two years ago while on a hard winter tour, far from home and without medical aid until too late. For several years he had given himself without stint to this most difficult of missionary service, growing in consecration and power, counting all things but loss for the sake of Him Whom he served.

It has been said that probably no Church in the Orient, in proportion to its numbers, has sent out so many preachers, teachers, colporteurs and other Christian workers. During these later years, nearly of our stations in Persia have had employed in their work men and women who are the product of this Church.

In 1870 the name of the Mission was changed from "Mission to the Nestorians" to "Mission to Persia". In 1871 the A. B. C. F. M. turned over the Mission work to the Presbyterian Board and at that time there were forty-eight out stations, nine ordained men, fifty-two preachers, forty-six teachers, 1012 pupils, and nine organized churches with over seven hundred communicants.

In 1885 when the Mission held its Jubilee, there were twenty-five organized churches, forty-eight other congregations, thirty-six ordained ministers, thirty licentiates, a membership of twenty-three hundred with six thousand adherents and four self-supporting churches. The yearly contributions were two thousand dollars for

dollars for churches and schools and three hundred dollars for Missions

No church was organized until able to pay one-fourth of its expenses. Mr. James Basset said that when he visited Urumia in 1871, the subject most urged upon the Evangelical Church was that of self support.

The part of the Jubilee celebration in Syriac was held at in the College Compound in July 1885 with fifteen hundred present. One of the most impressive features was the presence of eight hundred Syrian women, most of them with Testaments and Hymn-books.

A Mohammedan official present asked "What are those women doing here with books in their hands?" When all the women who could read were asked to rise, six hundred responded. Fifty years before only one woman in the nation could read, the sister of the Patriarch.

The influence of the Evangelical Church upon the women cannot be measured. Hundreds, yes, thousands of Godly women have taken their places of responsibility in the Church, many of them as deaconesses, teachers and evangelists. They have built up thousands of Christian homes, sending out immeasurable influences for righteousness in this Moslem land. They have trained their children to carry on in the Christian way of living. There have been and are to-day women much stronger and more dependable in the leadership of the Church than any of the men of their villages.

At the time of the Jubilee of the Mission, the largest and strongest church was in Geogtapa, a village of fifteen hundred inhabitants one-half of whom were adherents of the Protestant Church, which had a membership of over three hundred. The church was self-supporting and made contributions to Missions. It was well organized with pastor, elders, deacons, deaconesses, and had a Sabbath-School, Bible classes and Missionary Society.

The deaconesses divided the women so that each had her own group to help, instruct, and guide in their efforts in their efforts to extend the Kingdom. Last but not least, they settled all quarrels among the women. Some of the deaconesses went to other villages on Sunday to help and teach the women. "This was a church holding the pure Gospel, self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating." The fulfillment of the aim and purpose of Missions.

This church during the war years was twice destroyed, but to-day they are worshipping in a new building with faces hopefully turned toward the future.

In 1897 came the Russian Mission to Urumia with all the power of a political organization, under the patronage of the Tsar.

As the priests went from village to village, they took over the Nestorian church building without asking permission and without regard to legal rights and reconsecrated them as Orthodox churches.

Those who gave their names to be written were received into the Orthodox Church. They made confession to the priests, and later all the "converts" were given the Communion. In this way the Russian Church took over nearly the whole of the Nestorian Church, a great many Armenians and Roman Catholics, and some of the weaker members of the Protestant Church. Most of the members of the Evangelical Church were loyal and stood firm in the midst of great temptation.

Those who had become Orthodox were not true converts, but they had so long suffered oppression from a Mohammedan Government and were so terrified by the recent massacres of Christians in Turkey, that they hoped to find refuge in the Russian Church and protection from their oppressors through the power of the Russian Government, which was then strong in Persia.

The Church celebrated its Jubilee in 1912 with great gratitude to God for its strong organization, with schools in ~~practically~~ nearly every villages where there were churches, for its enlightened membership of over three thousand, with the Word of God in practically every every home engraved upon their minds and hearts, for its material prosperity, for lessened oppressions, for a deepened sense of missionary responsibility as voiced by Dr. Wm.A. Shedd, " The justification for the existence of the Church will lie not so much in its doctrine as in its missionary activity. Our justification will be very largely in the work done in making the Gospel known to Moslems and in extending evangelical truth among the various peoples, Christian and non-Christian, with whom its members come in contact."

During the last decade before the World War, the question of the Church's independence was given a great deal of consideration, the Station urging and the Church fearing acceptance of its responsibility.

The Evangelistic Board, as the executive body of the Church, had for a long time been responsible for ~~the~~ one-third of the financial support of the Church as a whole, and a few individual churches were entirely self-supporting.

This Board finally accepted its entire responsibility for the Church, with subsidies from the Station and agreed with the Mission upon certain principles for working out their problems, in substance as follows :

" (1) The principle that the Mission should not exercise control over the Native Church, this being interpreted so that even the grant of money does not carry with it the right of control over the expenditure of the money.

(2) The Mission is not under compulsion to make grants in aid to the Church, and in making such grants, the understanding if not the formal condition, should be that they are not for the purpose of enabling the Christian communities to have ' regular services', but to aid them as Evangelistic agencies.

(3) The principle of co-operation as separate bodies in the relation of the Mission and the Church. They are bound together by bonds of love and service.

(4) The Mission may properly exercise independent control of the work carried on by it which is in character auxiliary to rather than essentially a part of the Church work, such as educational, literary and medical work. This line cannot be arbitrarily drawn and there will be need of patience, forbearance, and careful thought.

(5) As missionaries we have both the right and the privilege to be evangelists, but in the exercise of this work among Moslems and non-Moslems, care must be taken to stimulate and not discourage the missionary spirit of the Church."

Then came the World War bringing such devastation to this Church that scarcely a Christian was left in Urumia or in the mountain filed to testify to his faith, though hundreds of men and women did testify by untold suffering and by death, of their living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Probably as many as four-fifths of their ordained men and other Christian workers and two-thirds of the membership perished or were scattered to the four winds.

During the last decade, that is from the fall of 1922, the scattered remnant have been creeping back to their desolated homes and churches. The Church is being reorganized. There are about a thousand members, with only three ordained men. One of these was ordained in the Old Church. There are ten organized churches and between forty and fifty other groups scattered all over the plain of Urumia.

This year a new plan is being put into effect, with the purpose of putting all the responsibility for the churches upon the General Knusha. Each church or group must present its budget every year to the Knusha. After approval by this body, the Station votes such subsidies as are approved by them. Responsibility for employment of pastors and evangelists and approval of students for theological training is on the Knusha. There are many problems yet to solve, but they are standing up bravely to their duty.

Several churches have been rebuilt, each congregation subscribing according to its ability up to more than one-half the cost. Others are waiting until the groups are ready to do their share.

There are two theological classes with nine students. Four will graduate in 1933 and settle in pastorates. All are now giving week-ends and vacations to preaching in villages.

The largest and most prosperous church is in the city of Urumia. They contributed about half the cost of their church and are carrying a goodly share of pastor's salary, ~~and~~ as well as, all other church expenses.

A tremendous blow to the Church was the closing by the Govt. of the village church schools. This means that the large majority, now many hundreds of the children of the Church, have no opportunity for even the most elementary education. If this continues, the Bible will become a closed book to the village churches, except for the few who may be able to come to the city schools.

What has been, by the grace of God, may be again. We shall see a strong spiritual Church scattered through this part of Persia, a light to lighten the Mohammedan world round about.

With all their weaknesses, which are inevitable in a people who for centuries have been persecuted and oppressed, living in fear, the Syrians are responsive to religious appeal and are peculiarly fitted to be evangelists and preachers. May many individuals ~~again~~ be chosen by God from among them for the task of evangelizing Persia.

Mary Lewis Shedd

(Mrs. Tom. 4.)

Urumia Persia, August, 1932.

September 23, 1932

My dear Mrs. Walton,

I am afraid they cut us off when you were speaking to me over the telephone a few days ago. I tried to get you again but without success. Since talking to you a letter has been received from Mrs. Shedd in which she writes as follows:

"I am enclosing a copy of an article which I was assigned to write by the Station. Bishop Linton is to write the chapter on "The Indigenous Church" for the Centennial Book and each station has one of its members write on the subject for that station, so as to furnish source material for Bishop Linton. The same is being done for the writer of every chapter.

"I am to write the first chapter of that book, a general sketch of Missions for a hundred years. It was for that chapter that I want the material from the Board files. That is - my chapter is to cover all Persia.

"Mrs. Walton wrote me that she had engaged someone to do the work and that the material would be sent in June. It has not yet arrived, and I am writing Mrs. Walton to look it up."

Sincerely yours,

Secretary to Mr. Speer.

C.

Dr. Robert E. Speer
For your information.
A. L. Warnshuis

A. L. Warnshuis

October 30, 1933.

Dr. W. I. Chamberlain,
25 East 22nd Street,
New York, N.Y.

My dear Dr. Chamberlain:

I return herewith the file of correspondence and other papers referring to the Assyrian problem.

I had over an hour's conversation with Mr. Murray and Mr. Alling on this subject last Friday. We compared notes regarding the information in our possession and I was impressed with the fact that full information is not only in the files in the State Department but is in Mr. Murray's mind. He seems to be intimately acquainted with all of the details of these recent events and has an unusual appreciation of their significance. He was reserved in expressing his judgment but said quite freely that the letter of Mr. Berdeau~~u~~ seemed to be an excellent summary of the whole situation and he was in agreement with the judgments expressed in Mr. Berdeau~~u~~'s closing paragraph. It is evident that the Department is keeping itself well informed with reference to this situation but there was no discussion of any policy and much less of any action that our Government might take with reference to these events.

I obtained the additional information, which is not in your papers, that Mr. Cumberland with the assistance of Mr. Knabenshue, the American Minister, had an interview with the Minister of the Interior with the result that Mr. Cumberland was entirely exonerated of the charges that had been made regarding alleged "political activity." Mr. Murray understood that Mr. Panfil was leaving Iraq or had already gone because of lack of financial support for that mission.

I shall be glad to meet with you and Paton on Saturday when we can talk further regarding this situation and especially regarding further action by Mr. Paton in England.

Yours truly,

A. L. Warnshuis

ALW:H

C O P Y

I N T E R N A T I O N A L M I S S I O N A R Y C O U N C I L

4 1 9 F O U R T H A V E N U E
N E W Y O R K

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Yours truly,

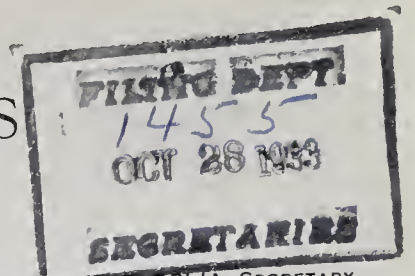
(signed) A. L. Warnshuis

ALW:H

Jonathan S. Colia

COUNCIL OF ASSYRIAN SOCIETIES

1922 Cleveland Avenue
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



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JOEL SARGIS, VICE-PRESIDENT

JONATHAN S. COLIA, SECRETARY
S. G. DAVAJAN, ASST. SECRETARY
BABA SARGIS, TREASURER

1933

October 24, 1933

Dr. Robert E. Speer
156 Fifth Avenue
New York City

Dear Dr. Speer:

Our Council wishes to thank you most sincerely for your very kind letter of October 7 and your helpful suggestions.

Regarding the Assyrians who have gone into Syria we have no definite information as to how many of them are in that country now. But we do know they are located in or near a place called Deir-ez-Zor. As to the attitude of the French authorities, from all that we know they are sympathetic.

We have received several communications from our Patriarch, His Beatitude Mar Shimun, who, as you no doubt know, was exiled by the Iraq Government to Cyprus and is at present in Geneva, together with a prominent Swiss attorney, pleading the cause of our unfortunate people before the League of Nations. We had a letter from him yesterday informing us that he is doing all in his power to get some favorable action.

Several days ago we received a few copies of a personal appeal from His Beatitude Mar Shimun, addressed to all the Christian Churches. All of these copies bear his signature and seal, and the truthfulness of the contents of this appeal is unquestionable. We are enclosing a copy for your and the Board of Foreign Missions' information.

We are profoundly grateful for all you and the Board of Foreign Missions have done for our people in the past and we earnestly ask you to give us your support and aid in this the darkest hour in the history of our people.

As yet we have not communicated with Dr. W.J. Chamberlain. In all probability we will.

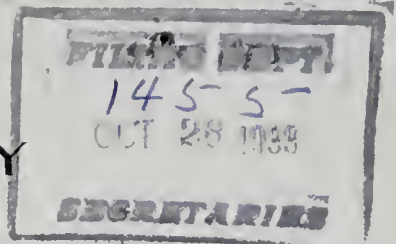
Most sincerely yours,

COUNCIL OF ASSYRIAN SOCIETIES

Jonathan S. Colia Secretary

John B. Keenan

ÆTNA LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT.



AGENCY AT 1010 Congress
Bldg., Miami, Florida.

Oct. 25, 1933

Dr. Robert E. Speer
New York City.

My dear Dr. Speer:

I am writing you from the office of a friend in Miami, Florida. My older son (there are two boys) is unable to live in Northern climates, and for the last two years I have established the family in this state. The boy has done so well that I may decide to live here permanently. This will explain my presence in this city.

The long expected letter from my father arrived yesterday. He

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has written some 14 pages in Syriac, AGENCY AT
which would probably mean 25 pages
if translated into English.

My father asked me to give you
and Dr. McDowell a summary
of his statement. I hasten to do this
because I know you are anxious
to get the facts.

As I wrote you from Cuenimata
recently I have been unwilling to rush
~~in~~ and accuse the Iraq government
of willful murder of innocent men
and women. I know our mountain people
too well to accept such a naive
theory. And my suspicions have been
confirmed by my father's statement. I
shall give you the story briefly.

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In the last 25 years, our ^{AGENCY AT} nestonian people have had the worst sort of leadership from Mar Shimmun, who is their traditional spiritual as well as Temporal leader. You know Surma, the sister of the late Mar Shimmun, and the Aunt, I think of the present lad, who calls himself the leader of our people. The leadership of the house of Mar Shimmun has brought more tragedies upon our nestonian people than any other single cause. That leadership has been marked by stupidity and ignorance, by selfishness and greed, and by utter lack of understanding of the fundamental issues facing the neighboring governments

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AGENCY AT

of Persia, Turkey, and Iraq. One would think that the experience of the last 16 tragic years had taught Sumner and ^{his} cohorts something; but no! She remains the same type of a leader that she was in 1916 and 1917 and 1918 when the Kurdistan Mountains were for all practical purposes destroyed forever, as far as nationhood is concerned.

The cause of the present disaster started some 18 months ago, when Mr. Shimmun called a "Convention" at Amidia, which is at the foothills of the Kurdistan Mountains. There he laid down the following policy:

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1. That his "nation" should strive for "independence".
2. That all ^{Nestorian} officers and enlisted men in the British and drag-army should henceforth be subject to his command in case he called them to arms for the purpose of revolution or in case he decided to fight for the "freedom" of his people. My father warned him against such tactics and begged him to give up such foolish ideas in regard to the "independence" or freedom of our people. How can a few thousand of poor and oppressed people build

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a great and Independent ^{AGENCY AT} "Notion"?
The idea is worthy only of the mind
of a child. But Mr. Shimmun
persisted, and the climax was
reached this summer when some
1500 people left Iraq to go to the
borders of Syria to establish for
themselves a home. The Iraqi
troops attacked them and treated
them as traitors and insurrectos,
and the ever willing Kurds joined
in, and some 800 to 900 were killed.
My father says that he will know
soon just how many were slaughtered.
The sad part of this whole tragic affair
is that ^{many} so innocent men and women
and children were massacred.

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There are 1500 orphans ^{AGENCY AT} and widows
in one camp in Mosul. My father
says that all the people that listened
to him ^(my father) and followed his advice are
safe in Iraq and are not molested.
In fact the Iraq government is
taking care of the 1500 orphans and
widows. The provocation for this
terrible tale came from our people.
That is the point to remember. But
the result is indeed awful. My father
describes the unpeakable misery of
the widows and orphans and the destruction
wrought by Kurds and the usual
performances with which you are
familiar.

Briefly that is the story. It does
not alter the suffering of the innocents,

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and the cry of the helpless children
who are left behind.

AGENCY AT

Max Shummen and his house
have been banished from the Country.
Good riddance! Our people must
now decide to become peaceful
and law abiding citizens and give
up forever this childish idea of
becoming a "great" and "independent"
people. Our days are numbered, and
in the providence of God our "New
Nation" as such will before long become
a mere memory.

My father has given a great many
other details, hence if you have
any questions that have not been

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answered, I should be ^{AGENCY AT} happy to give
you what information I have
on the subjects in question.

- With kindest personal regards,
and best wishes,

Respectfully and Cordially Yours,

John B. Keena

n.B. until Nov. 15th at 1010 Congress
Bldg., Miami, Florida.

J.B.K.

J. S. Badeau -
C O P Y

Dr. Speer

Baghdad - Iraq -
August 25, 1933

CONFIDENTIAL

The Revd. W. I. Chamberlain, Ph.D., Secretary,
United Mission in Mesopotamia,
25 East 22d St.,
New York City, U.S.A.

My dear Dr. Chamberlain:

Official communiques are usually very unsatisfactory sources of information, and those issued by the Iraq Government during the recent Assyrian troubles are no exception to the rule. Mr. Cumberland had written for Dr. Speer a detailed account of events, a copy of which I enclose, and I wish to add some further review and comment, particularly in view of the effect of the disturbances on our Mission's work.

The "Report of Ten Years' Progress in Iraq, 1920-1930", which volume I am sending to you by Miss Honse, contains a good brief account of the situation of the Assyrian question up to Iraq's entry into the League of Nations. When the mandate was terminated the Iraq Government undertook to settle the homeless Assyrians on unoccupied lands in northern Iraq, a plan which had already been adopted by the British Administration. A Land Commission was appointed by the Iraq Government to deal with disputes arising out of the division of government lands in tribal areas, and a special member of the commission, Major Thompson, was given the oversight of the Assyrian settlement. He arrived in Mosul in May of this year, intending to proceed with the settlement.

Mar Shimun, the Assyrian Patriarch, has consistently opposed all efforts of the Iraq Government (as distinct from the British Administration) to cooperate in settling the Assyrian claims. After Iraq entered the League he journeyed to Geneva to lay before the League of Nations in person certain petitions expressing dissatisfaction with the promised treatment of the Assyrians in Iraq. These petitions were refused, and Mar Shimun returned to Iraq, apparently committed to the policy discrediting all attempts of the Iraq Government to settle the Assyrians. This attitude naturally embarrassed the Government in its settlement efforts as the whole weight of Mar Shimun's influence was being exerted against the acceptance by the Assyrians of the Government settlement scheme.

Mar Shimun's attitude seems to have been dictated by his mistrust of the good faith of the Iraq Government and the fact that

the proposed settlement would not leave the Assyrians intact as a political unit with him as their (political) head.

Before Major Thompson's arrival in Mosul, Mar Shimun had been invited by the Government to come to Baghdad for conference with the Department of the Interior. He was asked to make a declaration of loyalty to the Government, and to desist from all attempts to act as the political head of the Assyrian nation, confining his activities to the spiritual oversight of his people. This he refused to do, and in consequence was not allowed to return to Mosul. He was in Baghdad at the Y.M.C.A. under strict surveillance during all the trouble.

During May and June Major Thompson began the groundwork of settlement by calling meetings of local Assyrian leaders in the hope of obtaining their cooperation with the Government's plans. The majority of the tribes agreed to accept the proposed settlement, but a party of malcontents under Yaqu bin Malik Ismail of Upper Tiari (who was apparently acting under orders from Mar Shimun) refused cooperation in any way. Yaqu retired to the mountains with an armed force and threatened trouble. Under a promise of safe conduct he was at last brought to Mosul where the Revd. John B. Panfil, of the American Episcopal Mission to the Assyrians gave bond that he would keep the peace. On this promise he was allowed liberty. It seemed for a time as tho the unrest might not prove serious, and the settlement plans proceed as per schedule. The discontent was principally confined to the two tribes of Upper Tiari and Tekhuma, and cannot be said to have represented the attitude of the whole Assyrian nation.

However, Mar Shimun's enforced absence from Mosul made the Assyrians restless, and altho a certain amount of work was started continued unrest prevented much progress. On the tenth of July, the Iraq Government called a meeting of Assyrian leaders in Mosul at which it was announced that the original scheme of settlement would be adhered to, and that if any group of Assyrians did not like the plan the Government would be glad to expedite their emigration. Yaqu and some of the Pro-Mar Shimun leaders at once announced that they were going to Baghdad to consult with Mar Shimun. A few days later it was reported that they had appeared in the north-eastern corner of Iraq, and had crossed into Syria near Peish-Khabur. Apparently these leaders either returned to Iraq or sent back reports that the Syrian Government was ready to welcome Assyrian emigrants and provide them with shelter, for shortly after this a body of men estimated at from 1300 to 2000 left their families in the villages and moved across the Tigris River into Syria. There seems to have been no disorder during this emigration.

Just what happened next is difficult to say. The Iraq government dispatched soldiers (report states from two battalions to eight thousand soldiers) to Peish Khabur with the orders to disarm all Assyrians who desired to return to Iraq. A large party started to come back across the border, promising to give up their arms, and somehow - either by accident, or as seems more likely, by order of the extreme malcontents - shots were fired and a general

engagement took place between the Government forces and the Assyrians. The fighting lasted two days, August the fourth and fifth, and during its course about one hundred Assyrians were killed and thirty-five Iraq soldiers.

This incident started the "rebellion", and the Government hurried extra police and troops to the area and formed a force of special police from among the Kurds. Kurdish and Arab tribesmen started to loot Assyrian villages, but with little loss of life. Around Dohuk there were some individual Assyrians murdered or spirited away in the dark, and Assyrian prisoners taken as hostages were sent to Mosul - it is said to be disposed of on the way. On the whole the Kurds did far less damage than might be expected, even the special police behaving with surprising (for a Kurd) restraint.

So far the Government seem to have handled the situation fairly well - considering the character of the Arab officials and the traditional feud between the Kurds and Assyrians. But on the eleventh of August there occurred an incident for which there can be no excuse whatsoever. One can only say that it was sheer, brutal savagery - a reversion to the worst days of the Turkish treatment of the Armenians.

Some miles from Dohuk there is (or was) an Assyrian village called Sumeil. It lies in the plain at the base of the Kurdish hill ranges, and near it are several other Assyrian villages. These villages did not belong to the disaffected group. Their men had not left to cross into Syria. Many of the villagers were Iraqi citizens, and during the troubles had remained loyal to the government. Altho the orders were to allow all loyal Assyrians to retain their arms, many of the villagers had given their's up to the police. When the Kurds and Arabs started to loot, the Government ordered the surrounding villagers to come to Sumeil where there was a police post and they could be protected. Then on either the tenth of August or the morning of the eleventh, the remaining arms were collected so that the village - even had it been rebellious - was incapable of any kind of resistance.

This defenseless village, packed with refugees, was then systematically massacred. All of the men, with the exception of two or three who had gone to Dohuk were killed. The small Arab population of the town was untouched. Estimates of the number massacred vary from a minimum of three hundred and fifty to seven hundred. It is extremely difficult to get an accurate estimate at this time, as no impartial or European observer has been allowed in Sumeil. I suppose the truth will never be fully known, for the only people on the spot - the Iraq army - "do not choose" to tell, at least the truth.

The Government communiques issued in response to certain articles appearing in English papers stated that if there had been a massacre (a fact which seemed dubious!) it was the work of the Arabs and Kurdish tribesmen who were looting. But the truth is

that all the evidence points to the Iraq Army itself, acting under definite orders. All the survivors testify that the killing was done by "men in blue shirts". It is obvious that the Arab never uses any shirt, and the Kurd does not use blue ones. The only section of the population wearing blue shirts is the Machine Gun Corps - so the massacre must have been at the hands of the forces sent there for "protection". At dusk the Arabs and Kurds did come in to loot, and they probably killed some of the wounded. But the Government claim that (if there was a massacre!) the Arabs and Kurds did the killing and the troops hurried there for the defense of the villages cannot be accepted as anything but sheer and deliberate untruthfulness.

Some other Christian villages near Mosul were threatened by looters, but they escaped with little damage - both because many of the villagers were armed and because the Iraq police gave them some measure of protection.

Since the Sumeil incident the situation has been gradually growing quieter - at least on the surface. Many of the refugee Assyrians have come to Mosul where the R.A.F. planes are evacuating all relatives of the Levy troops. The Iraq Government has appointed Major Thompson as relief administrator, but until the present it has given him no funds. A group of Assyrians of uncertain number are said to be in Syria where the Syrian Government is supposed to have welcomed them. Mar Shimun has been deported to Cyprus, and his aunt, Lady Surma, with some of the Assyrian leaders have been brought to Baghdad, where they are under surveillance at the Y.M.C.A. Things for the moment are quiet, but the Government is still in a very combustible state of mind and no one knows yet quite what the next move may be.

Both Mosul and Baghdad, where there are Assyrian settlements, were under great tension during these troubles. At least one Assyrian was killed in the bazaar at Mosul, and much irresponsible talk was current among the lower Moslem elements. Baghdad was very vocal in its patriotism, but heavy police patrols have kept order.

At the outbreak of the troubles all our missionaries in the northern area were at their usual stations, with the exception of the Glesner family, which was summering at Shaqlawah. On the eighth of August, just after the Peish Khabur incident, the United States Minister requested me to wire the Cumberlands asking them to return to Mosul and remain there. I did this, but my wire reached Mosul too late to catch Mr. Cumberland. The British Administrative Inspector had ordered the Cumberlands out of Dohuk on the sixth, and they had come at once to Mosul. On the eighth Mr. Cumberland returned to Dohuk, leaving his wife in Mosul. He was in Dohuk during the Sumeil massacre.

On the sixteenth/the Minister again requested that I confer with him, and suggested that all our missionaries be withdrawn from the Mosul district. He requested this action both as a precautionary measure of personal safety, and because the Iraq Foreign Office

had sent him a strongly worded note protesting against alleged "political activities" of Mr. Panfil and Mr. Cumberland. He feared that if a second protest was made the Government would request the people involved to leave the country, and so in the interests of our work strongly advised temporary withdrawal.

I at once sent a plain language message (code cables were suspect and might be delayed) calling a "special conference" of the Mission in Baghdad. The Willoughbys, Cumberlands, Miss Akerman and Mr. Glessner came at once to Baghdad, arriving there on Friday the eighteenth. Mr. Glessner had left his family in Shaqlawah because one of the children was unfit to travel. After conference with the Minister it was decided that the Glessners might remain in Shaqlawah, since there had been no trouble there, but they were to be ready to leave at a moment's notice.

The rest of the missionaries remained in Baghdad, where they are at the present. Mr. Willoughby wanted to return on this coming Monday to Mosul, but the Minister, after conference with the British Ambassador (who returned hurriedly from Scotland) has advised him to stay a few days longer until it is apparent what course of action the Iraq Government intends to take.

I am much concerned about the accusation brought against Mr. Cumberland. The note used strong phrases in referring to his "philanthropic and religious work which is being used as a blind for political activities". It is understandable why the Iraq Government should suspect Mr. Panfil. He has been close to Mar Shimun and has on several occasions acted as a mediator between the Government and the Assyrians (at the Government's request, however). He gave bond for Yaqu, the leader of the "rebellion". But with all that he has always opposed Mar Shimun's policies and has really been a strong force urging the Assyrians to adopt a cooperative attitude toward the Government.

But even these doubtful "political activities" cannot be attributed to Mr. Cumberland. His article about the Assyrians in the April "World Dominion" was highly acclaimed by the local press as an exoneration of Iraq's Assyrian policy, and several of the Arab Government officials have spoken to both him and me in praise of it. During these troubles (as well as long before), Mr. Cumberland used his influence to induce the Assyrians to become good Iraqies, and to trust the Government. And yet this is "political activity!"

As a matter of fact, we think that the real purpose back of the note was to clear all possible witnesses out of the troubled area. The Government does not want any contradictions or corrections of its official reports, nor any witnesses who can tell what really happened. The note from the Foreign Office came directly after the Sumeil massacre, from which I deduce that the occurrence of that incident so embarrassed the Government that they hurried all impartial onlookers out of the area.

The Minister has promised to take the matter up with the Iraq Government as soon as the present fever heat of anti-Assyrian

feeling has subsided. Mr. Cumberland has tried to have an appointment with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, but the return of the triumphant Iraq Army fresh from its slaughters has temporarily made it difficult. It will be hard to get the Government to retract its charges, and I am not sure that we ought to press for a formal retraction if doing so will only create ill will. When the troubles are over the Government will probably "forget" its charges and allow the Cumberlands to return without further protest.

Having written thus at length I shall not attempt much comment on the situation. The following statements represent my own opinion:

1. A definitely cooperative policy on the part of Mar Shimun would have resulted in the peaceful settlement of the Assyrians - though not according to their plans. This is denied by many, but I feel that the Government was sincere in its plans. To this extent, then, Mar Shimun is responsible for the present disaster.

2. The Sumeil incident was without any excuse whatsoever, and more than cancels the moderation which the Government has used toward the Assyrians until it took place.

3. The Government probably used the growing Assyrian discontent as a counter-irritant to the Shia-Sunni trouble in lower Iraq. I have been told that had the Assyrian incident not occurred there would have been a Shia outbreak in the South. When Feisal returned hurriedly from England this summer it was reported that the reason was the Shia discontent, rather than the Assyrian trouble. The Assyrian uprising made a splendid appeal to Iraqi patriotism against a foreign group, and Moslem prejudice against the Christians, and diverted attention from internal Moslem troubles.

4. It was hardly fair to put such an involved and difficult problem as the Assyrian question into the hands of a new and inexperienced government. It ought to have been settled by the British before they relinquished their mandate. British persuasion and British promises brought the Assyrians to this country, British policy should have provided for them. In that sense the British were at fault.

It is difficult to play the prophet and foresee the future. There is at present, amongst the very nationalistic Government circles, definite anti-British and anti-Christian feeling. It would not be impossible that the present Cabinet might force Feisal to relinquish his throne and set up a republic, destroying all British treaties. No one knows. But I think that within a fairly short time the situation will be clarified, and we will be able to return to our stations.

Since all mail is being censored I am sending this by Miss Honse to Jerusalem. Please be extremely guarded in any reply you may make. As soon as the mails are once again reliable, I will inform you.

I am sending a copy of this to Dr. Cantine, and one to the Near East Christian Council's Committee on Government and Missions.

Please inform any of the missionaries' relatives who make inquiry that the members of the Mission are in no danger, and are only temporarily detained in Baghdad.

With greetings from all the Mission.

Very sincerely,

(Signed) J.S.B.

Secretary

Rev. J. W. Willoughby,
American Mission,
Mosul, Iraq.

Telegrams: SYNODICAL, MOSUL.

SEP 14 1933

27 August, 1933.

Dr. R. E. Speer,
156 Fifth Avenue,
New York, N.Y.

Dear Dr. Speer:

I enclose a few remarks on the present Iraq situation. I have read Cumberland's letter, and take the liberty of starring certain paragraphs in my writing which deal with incidents which he does not treat. Please circulate the paper freely among such persons as Dr. Chamberlain and any who might be interested; then when you have finished with it, please mail to

Mrs. B. H. Rankin,
534 East Bowman Street, ^{BM}
Wooster, O.

Mrs. Rankin will show it to Dr. McDowell if he is still in that city. My general cautionary remarks in the use of the paper, of course do not apply to you, as I trust your judgment implicitly.

I hope we can be back in Mosul within a couple more days. We may not feel free to express ourselves ad libitum for some time to come; but will doubtless devise means to send any really important news.

Sincerely yours,

J. W. Willoughby.

703 Church Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan.

January 13, 1932

Dr. Robert E. Speer, Sec
Presbyterian Bd. Foreign Missions,
156 Fifth Avenue, New York City

Dear Dr. Speer:

Your letter of December 10th, is before me. You ask me if some time I would set down for you, briefly yet comprehensively, a statement of the Mosul situation as I understand it. I need not tell you that it gives me special pleasure to be called upon to render some service in the cause of the Master.

I have taken time to study the questions and to collect my thoughts. You will remember, of course, that I have been away from the field for nearly four years which fact may affect the accuracy of some of my answers.

Your inquiries are as follows:

I. The Evangelical Assyrians: How many are there? Where are they located? What is the Mission doing for them?

1. How many are there?

I take it that you mean by "evangelical Assyrians" members of the Evangelical Church and their families. But it will be proper I think to include also such as have had long continued association with us and while not enrolled as Protestants are recognized as evangelicals in faith and life: all residing now in Iraq.

After calling the roll by communities my estimate of their numbers is two thousand, including men, women and children.

2. They are located as follows:

(a) Bagdad: City and suburb; groups located along the rail road lines - Bagdad to the Persian border; Bagdad to Kerkuk; Bagdad to Busra. The largest group is the one in Bagdad city.

(b) Mosul city.

(c) Villages in the Mosul area; Dwelling in villages largely of their own construction, grouped according to their tribal connections, and having as their political centers the following villages: Semail; Duhuk; Zakho; Elkosh; Ain Sufani; Amadia; Berwar; These are largely the mountain ashirets, Tiary, Baz, Jelu, Tkhoma, Ishtazin and Gawar, all of them in close touch with us through the years. Each such center would have perhaps on an average four refugee villages grouped about it. Our mountaineer Protestants are intermingled with these fellow tribesmen.

(d) Groups of Evangelicals who have maintained their identity throughout the war period.

Dihi: in Supna: These many years an organized Church.

Bohtan group, remnants of the Bohtan churches in Monsoria; Mar Akha; MarYokhanan etcet. West of Tigris, having Zakho as center.

Amadia group, old time congregations.

The Dihi and Bohtan groups are as distinctively evangelical as any of our own Scotch-Irish country churches. The Dihi people are in their own village in which they maintained themselves throughout the war.

The Bohtan group have selected for themselves, with the permission of the government, a location west of the Tigris which is more or less exposed being rather in close proximity to the borders of Turkish and French territory.

3. What is our Mission doing for them?

(a) Bagdad and vicinity: You will remember the large Congregation in old building on the outskirts of the city; that work was committed to the care of Kasha Pera Mirza and Rabi Khendo: They fostered it until it became as enlightened and strong as any of our old churches in Urumia. Under Rabi Khendo the church schools (which were organized by Mrs. McDowell) became as efficient as any of the government schools and were highly commended by the British School supervisor. Kasha Pera faithfully established preaching places in two other quarters of the city: He also as opportunity could be found visited various groups along the railroads leading out of Bagdad. The whole Bagdad area has been fairly well pastored.

It is to be regretted that it must be said that during the last two years there has been retrogression, both in the schools and in the church. The community has been weakened by withdrawal of some of its best elements to Persia. The departure of Kasha Pera Mirza to America, further weakened the enterprise and led to unfortunate complications. Withdrawal of Mission support has further discouraged them.

(b) Mosul city: The evangelical group in the city has been faithfully shepherded by good Kasha Keena assisted by Rabi Esyet who has faithfully and efficiently acted as matron for our small hostel and been the life and directing energy in all work for our Assyrian girls and women: There is stated worship; Sabbath school; Christian Endeavor. At intervals Kasha Keena has made visits to outlying groups of Evangelicals to administer the Sacraments and to give heart to the people in general.

(c) Evangelical groups in the villages of Mosul Area:

For care of these scattered groups there are six of our regular native staff so located as to be able to cover the field. In addition to these there are three unpaid helpers who give largely of their time and whose devotion is not surpassed by the paid helpers.

In general it can be said that our flock is as adequately shepherded as the average church group here at home.

(d) Education: In this matter there is serious lack. Our people feel this deprivation of educational privileges very greatly. In the city of Mosul our Assyrian girls are attending the government schools which while fairly efficient along educational lines do not and cannot afford a high moral environment nor Biblical and religious instruction. The boys have their choice between the government schools and the two Nestorian schools, the one taught by Mr. Panfil and the other by Kasha Joseph Kalatia.

In the villages we have no schools at all which sad fact is greatly lamented by our people. They are perplexed: we "used to have some thirty or more schools in the villages; Why not now?"

II. The Old Church Assyrians: How many? Where located? What is their Relation to the Patriarch and to his Family?

It is difficult to make an estimate of the numbers of the Old Church Assyrians now in Iraq. There have been many changes and fluctuations; so even since I left four years ago.

We have, however, a basis for an estimate furnished by General Austin, Refugee Camp Commandant at Kakuba in his published report made when the camp was at its ~~nestings~~ maximum.

He states the total number to be 45,000 and divides them roughly into three equal classes - Armenians; Urumians and Mountaineers.

The Urumians would include Salmas and the mountain districts bordering on the Urumia plains. Allowing for Evangelicals and Roman Catholics, also for losses by exodus and over against such losses the gains from that portion of the mountain population that lived on the Mosul side of the mountains remaining there during the war and were not included in the Camp estimate, 20,000 would seem to me to be a very conservative estimate for the old church Assyrians.

THEIR LOCATION

Bagdad and suburbs; Villages, along the railway lines to Persian border and to Kerkuk

Mosul City: Oil Fields; Army Service.

VILLAGES: Some fifty villages, largely of their own construction grouped about central government villages on the main highways leading out from Mosul to the north, east and south these government villages, i.e., occupied by some minor government official, are Rawanduz; Nowcheeah; Elkosh; AinSufni; Semail; Zakho; Duhuk; Supna valley; Anadia valley; Berwar valley. They are grouped for the most part according to their tribal connections.

It should be noted that the Assyrians have pitched their tents toward their own country, occupying the border land. The territory they have settled in impinges on Persia, Turkey, and French Mandate.

What is their Relation to the patriarch and to his Family?

This also is a difficult question, especially after an absence of nearly four years. In general it can be said that the spirit of the people toward their Patriarch ranges all the way from fervent loyalty on the one side, to general religious indifference to open antagonism, on the other side. The antagonism centers about one individual, a Kasha Yosep Kalaita, whose opposition is based largely on his selfish purposes. The Patriarchate has never been of higher moral and spiritual character than it is at present. The Patriarch, still a very young man, was educated in England under the personal supervision of the Archbishop of Canterbury. I am personally acquainted with him and know him to be spiritually alive, of fine moral character, fair mental equipment and concerned for the spiritual welfare of his people. He is modest and courteous in all his relationships. His Bishops are loyal to him with one possible exception. The great majority of his people would stand by their Patriarch under any circumstances and it is probable that the disaffected element in a crisis would rally to his support. The Protestants undoubtedly would support him

This question includes the House of the Patriarch: The member of His house that stands closest to him in all affairs is his aunt, Lady Surma, who in several interregnums has been officially recognized by the British officials as acting and responsible Head of the Assyrians. The next group would be composed of his father and mother and younger brothers and sisters. There are also several close relatives who are in close contact with the Patriarch and are sometimes called into family counsels.

The father of Mar Shimon David effendi, has held a position with the government as Commander of the Assyrian military force numbering at times, perhaps two thousand rifles. The immediate economic household consists of the Patriarch, Lady Suma, the father and mother and their minor children. There is also a fringe of indigent relatives and servants. Visitors are many and cannot be turned away.

Their household revenue consists of offerings from the people, free willed or levied; and such stipends as they receive from the Irak government and through the Episcopal Mission, amounts unknown to me.

I know that they feel the necessity to economize and that they do make such endeavor in their own family circle. e.g. The children take turns in having new clothes for their important feast days. They show no false pride in their economies - ~~staxi~~ unless it be in their pride of hospitality.

Family attachment is strong; the members are loyal to one another; harmony prevails. So far as I know the younger members of the family bear a good reputation and enjoy the affection of their people.

The name of an important member of the family has been omitted, Zaya, brother to David effendi and uncle of the Patriarch. He is the family treasurer, in highest repute among all classes for honesty, good business judgment and inoffensive character. He is a member of the inner household circle.

III. Other Christian Groups in the Mosul Area

What are the political Status and the conditions of each of these groups?

The other Christian groups in the Mosul Area are, The Jacobites; The Chaldeans; The Armenians; and the Protestants. (Arabic speaking.) These are all native to the Mosul region. Taken all together they still constitute the smallest of the minority groups, with the exception of the Jews and the Yexidees.

The Jacobites dwell in part in the villages but for the greater part in the City of Mosul. In the city they are a strong and influential body; possessed of considerable wealth; are in good repute with the government; have a resident bishop; they rank high in intelligence and character; make much of their parochial schools; many of their young men and women have received a higher education in the American schools in Mardin and Beirut. These forty years or more they have fraternized most cordially with the Protestants. They have been influential in softening Moslem prejudices. Their ecclesiastical center is in Deir Zafran, near Mardin. They have many communities in Turkey and Palestine and also on the Malarbar coast in India.

I cannot give accurate figures as to their numbers in Irak.

The Chaldeans: Is a Uniate Church under the Pope of Rome; have developed under the care of a French Mission having the patronage of the French government. They are strong in numbers, both in the city and in the villages, Elkosh, Telkeif, Teliskof, Botnai, Bartelli, and others. They are a proselyted offshoot from the Nestorian church. Backed by the strong French Mission they wage an unceasing effort the parent body to Rome. The Chaldeans have paid little attention to education and are correspondingly lower in character and social culture. They have many wealthy families and have always been active in political affairs. They have a strong community in Bagdad.

The Armenians: These are comparatively few in numbers; are largely of the merchant class, appreciative of schools, intelligent and influential.

The Protestants: These as you know are few in numbers but out of proportion to their numbers have standing and influence in the community, among Moslems and before the government.

The Syrian Catholics should have been mentioned in connection with the Chaldeans being also a Uniate Church in connection with Rome.

Their parent Church is the Jacobite Church; they are much fewer in numbers than the Chaldeans and correspondingly weaker in wealth and influence. They also are under the French Mission.

As regards the Political Status of these Christian groups it may be said in general that there is a recognition of them in the framework of the government. Christians will be found on some of the important municipal and vilayet or Boards of control, but to a very large consent they are silent partners. Christians occupy some executive positions of importance and trust, both in the city and in the outlying governmental centers. But the controlling positions, both executive and judicial, are in the hands of the Arab Moslems. ~~The~~

The government as a whole is firmly in the grasp of the Islamic Arabs. The courts are biased toward the followers of the Prophet.

The more intelligent classes can be depended upon to maintain a friendly attitude toward the Christians. But the spirit of the Islamic masses is fundamentally hostile toward all non-Moslem and requires but a spark to explode in violence toward them. It is a notorious fact that the cause of a non-Moslem before any of the courts is per se prejudiced. Without the shadow of a doubt the withdrawal of the British mandates will afford occasion for serious injustice to the non-Moslem minorities both in the courts and in the executive offices.

It is possible that due to the remarkable changes that have come about in recent years in the religious sentiment among Moslems in general there may be a lessening danger of serious massacres but aside from such violence it may be expected that economic jealousy and rivalry will be active factors in the relationship between Moslems and Christians in which the stronger will not scruple to use their advantage as entrenched in governmental privilege. What is meant can be understood from a parallel case in America - the relationship between the whites and the blacks.

This menace to the Christian minorities in Irak is sufficiently great and so assured that proper steps should be taken through the League of Nations, before the British have withdrawn to cast some safeguards about them. And it is both proper and advisable that this should be done for all minorities without distinction of creed as fully for the Yezidees as for the Christians.

IV. What is this present situation as to the Episcopal Mission and Mr. Panfil?

What are its relations to the Patriarch and his Family?
And to the Assyrians?

I have no up to date personal knowledge that would enable me to answer these two questions.

V. Your impression that the Episc^ogalians are discontinuing their financial support;
Mr. Lamsa's intimation that the Mission to the Old Church Assyrians might be passed over to the Presbyterians if they would subsidize the Patriarch's Household;

This is distinctly sad news: sad news in this, that it seems to indicate the final degree of waning interest on the part of the Episcopal Church at large in this remnant of the Church of the East. You have not asked me directly for my opinion in the matter, but it seems to me to be inadvisable for the Presbyterian Church to assume this heavy responsibility on the basis suggested. We do have a mission and a responsibility but it seems to me that they can be discharged with greater advantage to the Assyrians without formal assumption of trusteeship. Were we to assume such formal charge of affairs it is to be feared that there would be a complete withdrawal both of financial aid and, more important, political support on the part of their British friends; while if we remain unobligated and need arises these old time friends cannot but feel an obligation to extend a helping hand, especially in the way of political influence, and at the same time the Presbyterians can be depended upon to help meet the emergency.

It is evident that this ancient Church is approaching an extremely bad bit of road in their very long and chequered pilgrimage. My sympathy is awakened for them and my concern. It pleases me, Dr. Speer, that it finds you awake to the circumstances and so sympathetic.

A recent number of the periodical, *The Near East*, reports that Mar Shimon has addressed a petition to the British government requesting that he and his people be transferred to some less exposed location.

He is justified in so ^{asking} but it is not probable that his request can be granted. I can see no other alternative for him and his people than to cast in their lot with the other minorities. But it should not be overlooked that their position locally and their situation politically render the hazards more serious for them.

The situation for them is so serious that special attention should be given to it. Before withdrawing from their mandate the British will of course put in writing some stipulations as between themselves and the Iraq government: would it be possible to have included a clause relating to the rights of the minorities? Naturally for diplomatic reasons no special mention can be made of the Assyrians, what is done would have to be done in the name of all the Christian minorities.

Would it be possible to have a delegate at large appointed to the League of Nations whose sole duty it would be to keep a watchful eye on all weaker minorities especially such as are under alien government? To whom appeals could be made?

VI. You refer to a small sum set aside for Assyrians relief and not available for anything else.

This would mean a safe income from it of about one thousand dollars, annually. I take it that this fund must be used for the benefit of the people in general or for such portion of them as may be suffering severely as from famine, epidemic of disease or some political disaster. It occurs to me that this may become a providential resource for the near future which we may be very grateful to have to draw on.

I fear what I have written may prove very inadequate but it has been a pleasure to me to called upon.

Just a few minutes ago a letter reached me by post from an old friend of mine in Mosul. He is a deacon in the Old Church, for years was head teacher of the school under the English Mission in the mountains and until recently has been teacher in the Episcopalian school under Mr. Panfil in Mosul. He worked with me during the Relief period in Persia, Bakuba and Bagdad; was one of my right hand men, capable and trustworthy; and

and worked on an exceedingly small salary. For some reason unknown to him his salary has been discontinued and he has been left an old man with a large family dependent upon him and now without any means of support. In speaking of the people at large he takes a gloomy view of the situation. There is an obscure reference to an unsatisfactory condition in the Episcopalian Mission in Mosul.

This man is loved and trusted by Mar Shimon and Lady Surma. During all their trouble he has been a trusted staff to lean upon.

May I express the hope that this Assyrian people and Church be brought to the attention of such prayer circles as you are in touch with.

Very gratefully and cordially,

(Signed) E. W. McDowell.

R. C. Cumberland

OCT 18 1933

Dohuk, Iraq, 30.9.33.

67

Dear Doctor Speer:-

It is only a week or so since I wrote to you: I hope you will not be inundated by this unaccustomed flood of correspondence from Dohuk! And the only thing this time is a copy of a recent letter to Peekskill; I sent most of it also to Summit. You see, I've just been reading the new manual -- for which our thanks.

I hope to send soon a flock of clippings from the IRAQ TIMES, which I promised long ago. I doubt that they will give you any new information, but they may be interesting as showing what is (and is not) published in this country. I am sorry that I did not succeed in turning up one from last ^{or June} May, a communiqué from the Press Bureau, announcing the "happy ending" of the Assyrian trouble.

The atmosphere is not what one could ~~xxx~~ call that of peace and confidence, but there is not a great deal of actual disorder. All eyes are turned toward Geneva.

With most cordial regard,

Sincerely yours,

R. C. Cumberland

Roger C. Cumberland

57

FILING DEPT.

30-11
JUL 27 1933

SECRETARIAT

Dohuk, Iraq, 20 June, 1933.

JUL 19 1933

Dear Doctor Speer:-

Your last letter to me, dated 6 April, has been acknowledged (on 24 April) but your request that you be informed as to the repercussions from my article in WORLD DOMINION calls for some further word. They reperculated, all right! The thing was copied in THE NEAR EAST AND INDIA, and from that two of the Baghdad newspapers copied it in Arabic translation, and I woke up to find myself the unwilling center of quite a little tempest. The Mar Shimon party roundly condemn me for writing "against the Assyrians", to which I reply that the truth cannot be changed, and if they find it against them, they are the ones that must change. Those who do not hold by the Patriarch say that it is not very complimentary to the Assyrians, but that it is an accurate statement. Dr. Petros made no reply to my asking what he thought of it. Mr. Panfil commended me (to my face, at least, and I think genuinely.) I received a most scurrilous anonymous letter (in Syriac). Recently there was privately printed (in Arabic) a tirade against the Baghdad newspapers for refusing to publish an attack on me, together with the attack; it was that (simply ad hominem) rather than any attempt to refute what I had written. The government confiscated this pamphlet, but not, happily, before I received a copy; and I was urged to prosecute for libel, which I don't care to do. My chief satisfaction in the matter comes from the fact that no one has seriously challenged the ~~fact~~ accuracy of the facts of what I wrote. But my disappointment is much greater than my satisfaction; I did not want to stir up a fuss, nor be party ~~of~~ to an altercation: for that reason I tried to write both accurately and impartially. But (tho I seem to have succeeded in writing thus) the net result, locally, seems mostly contention and ill-will, which I heartily regret if it ends there, but which may be of ultimate value to the Assyrians if it contributes to their awakening to the real situation. The official thanks of the government acted as at least a little balm to me; and it is amusing to note how accurately the last paragraph of my article -- the prophetic part about Assyrian reactions -- is fulfilled. To view a ~~such~~ situation objectively is, perhaps, more than can be asked of so primitive a people.

The foreign expert which the government promised the League of Nations as settlement officer arrived recently in the person of Major Thomson, who seems to understand his work well. A large section of the Lower Tiaris (the principal group not yet settled) is accepting the very generous offer of the government; they have as their leader Malik Khoshaba, a son-in-law of Kasha Keena. Mar Shimon, however, has commanded those faithful to him to have nothing to do with any government offer, and still holds out to them absurd promises of felicity somewhere else, tho where is not mentioned. As of course you know, the Persia scheme came to nothing. The essential conflict is the same as when I last wrote: the Patriarch still claims civil authority over his people and the government denies it. Feeling runs high, and it would not take much, these days, to start a conflagration. For instance, an ex-Levies officer comes riding into Dohuk with thirty-four armed horsemen; it does not conduce to peace and quiet.

Word has just reached us of the hearty approval of the Board by General Assembly. We join in it.

Ever sincerely yours,

R. C. Cumberland

**THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U. S. A.
156 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK**

MEMORANDUM September 28, 1933.

FROM Miss Sheppard

To Dr. Speer

My dear Dr. Speer:

I am attaching recent letters from the missionaries in Iraq: original letter of Mr. Cumberland to you; original letter of Mr. Willoughby to you; copy of Mr. Badeau's letter to Dr. Chamberlain. These letters were referred to at the last Board meeting, with the very brief record as follows:

"Miss Sheppard reported briefly on the situation in Iraq, as outlined in the confidential letters of August 25th and 26th, from Mr. Badeau and Mr. Cumberland, with particular reference to the request of the American Minister that all missionaries be withdrawn from the Mosul area and remain temporarily in Baghdad. Both missionaries of the Board are in no danger."

Dr. Chamberlain, Dr. Cantine and I talked together regarding the fact that Mr. Cumberland had been accused of political activity. We, of course, all agreed that until some further word came, he and the mission were handling the matter in a wise way. I think both Dr. Cantine and Dr. Chamberlain thought that in the expected interview with the Foreign Minister, Mr. Cumberland's situation would be cleared, although it might be impossible for him to return to his station for some time.

A few days before Mr. Cumberland's letter arrived, Mr. Lamsa called at your office and talked with Miss Connell* regarding Mr. Cumberland's article in the April issue of the "World Dominion". We noted that you and he had been in correspondence about it. I think Dr. Cantine rather wonders whether Mr. Cumberland can prove several of his statements in his article, and I think some of us wish his facts had been phrased in a little different way. Nevertheless, I judge everyone is agreed on the united attitude of the Mesopotamia Mission, that the Assyrians must try to integrate themselves in the nation in whose confines they live. Dr. Chamberlain was expecting to see Mr. Panfil's correspondence with Dr. Emhardt. At Dr. Chamberlain's request, I sent him copies of Mr. Cumberland's and Mr. Willoughby's letters, that he might share them with Dr. Emhardt. We judge that the 2000 pounds which Mr. Panfil put up, as guaranteeing that Mr. Yaku would keep the peace, would have been forfeited.

I am also attaching a brief statement from Dr. Cantine, following his reading of Mr. Cumberland's and Mr. Willoughby's letters. I have not sent out Mr. Willoughby's letter to Dr. McDowell, as it seemed to me Mr. Willoughby would prefer that you read it and sent it on with any comments you desired.

Cordially yours,

Irene Sheppard
Irene Sheppard.

IS:MVS
encs.

* See Memo attached

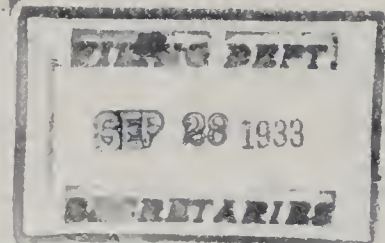
From Miss Counsel

DR. MCAFEE, RECD.

SEP 18 1933

✓

s/d



September 12, 1933

A Mr. George Lamsa of 18 W. 25th Street, called to see Mr. Speer today. He said he had been to see Dr. Chamberlain also but he was out of the city and that he had talked with his assistant. (Later I learned that it was Mr. Potter with whom he had talked).

Mr. Lamsa's object in coming was to let Mr. Speer know that the Assyrians in Mesopotamia were all convinced that the cause of the massacre of 700 of their people is Mr. Cumberland's article which he wrote some time ago for "World Dominion". They are greatly incensed and will surely assassinate Mr. Cumberland. Mr. Lamsa because of his warm regard for Mr. Speer and deep love of Dr. Shedd advises strongly that the Board recall Mr. Cumberland, who he says is not the type missionary like Dr. Shedd who never mixed in politics or tried to make money. Mr. Lamsa further stated that the State Department in Washington disapproves of Mr. Cumberland's article. In the course of his conversation Mr. Lamsa said that the Assyrians here in America will assassinate Mr. Cumberland also if they get a chance.

No word has been received by Mr. Speer's office from the State Department.

Miss Counsel

IRENE SHEPPARD
RECEIVED

SEP 27 1933

REV. JAMES CANTINE, D.D.
STONE RIDGE, NEW YORK

5 Stone Ridge, N.Y.
Sept. 25, 1933.

My dear Miss Sheppard:-

I am in your debt for your letter of September 22 and for the enclosed copies of letters from Mr. Cumberland and Mr. Willoughby, which I have read with much interest.

It is good to know that the missionaries on the field agree so well in their recital of facts and the interpretation thereof.

As for the future so much depends upon what action is taken by the British Government and the League. It is deeply to be regretted that the former king's influence is not now to be exercised. I think his hand would have been able to more rapidly bring back conditions to normal.

The correspondence with, or of, Mr. Panfil should be most interesting. Poor man, I fear he is in rather deeply!

Mr. Cumberland's return to Dohuk and his work in the north may be delayed for some time, and all the work of the Mission for the Assyrians is in the melting pot. We can only hope that this "turning and overturning" will speedily work for good.

Very cordially yours,

James Cantine

Letters of Mr. Cumberland and Mr. Willoughby enclosed.

Roger C. Cumberland

Copies to Chamberlain
Sulzardt
Cautini

CONFIDENTIAL

L/2/231 Sinak, Baghdad, Iraq,
26 August, 1933.

Dear Doctor Speer:-

I do not have my files with me here in Baghdad (and may never see them again), and so cannot say when it was that your last letter arrived. But some account of recent events in our field is sure to have reached you, and you may be wondering about its effect on us. At the moment our situation is that of very unwilling inhabitants of Baghdad. On Sunday, 6 August, I received a telephone call from Col. Stafford, the Administrative Inspector in Mosul, asking me to bring my wife to Mosul, which I did that day. I returned to Dohuk the next Tuesday; on Thursday of the next week (the 17th) a telegram from Mr. Badeau said for all of Mosul Station to come immediately to Baghdad, without questioning; we did so, and arrived here the afternoon of the 18th. Technically I am the culprit; the Iraqi Foreign Minister wrote to our Minister, Mr. Knabenshue, complaining of my "political activities" and requesting my removal from Dohuk. Mr. Knabenshue thought it wise for all of us to be here in Baghdad for a time. I might add that no specific charges were made and no evidence brought against me; and that up to the present I have not succeeded in getting an interview with the Foreign Minister. It seems to me obvious that Government does not want any foreign observer in the Dohuk district at present, rather than that it objects to any alleged political activities of mine. For my relations with Iraqis, both official and personal, have always been distinctly friendly; and I am conscious of having given no offence. It is not surprising that Government wishes to have the present situation concealed; it is not a pleasant sight. It is correspondingly undesirable, from my viewpoint, to be away from home. During a great part of my ten years in this country, I have had a deep sense of futility, and have had to live by faith; but in recent weeks it has seemed that I may have been of some real value to the community. So long as I was there, I felt a fair degree of security, not only for my own person and home and the village of Babilu, but also for my friends and neighbors. And if anything serious was to happen, I was quite ready for that also, there in the place where I belong. But I find it hard to be content here in Baghdad; I shall do my utmost to arrange to return to Dohuk as soon as possible.

In the meantime it may be well for me to write as fully as possible regarding the situation; for a postal censorship is easily possible, and I shall probably have to refrain from writing some kinds of things. It will probably be advisable for letters from the USA to be worded discreetly. In these days when war psychology and wartime propaganda prevail, it is very difficult to get at the facts in the case. I am taking it for granted that you have read the accounts given by the press (we have no means of knowing what they may be), and hope to gather for and send to you clippings from the IRAQ TIMES regarding the Assyrians. In this letter I shall give chiefly background and side-lights that may help toward the understanding of official and popular reports. There are others who are better qualified than I to give an official account; but my position has given me an opportunity for observation of certain aspects that few others have had.

It may seem like wandering far afield, but there must be in mind the fact that underneath all the present difficulties are centuries of history that have woven themselves into the very character of the peoples concerned, whether Assyrians, Arabs, Turks, or Kurds. A strong case can be made (tho it is not my opinion) that, given these basic factors, the substance of the present situation was inevitably coming, and might as well be now as any other time. In more proximate and tangible terms, where things went astray was at the demarcation of the present Turko-Iraqi boundary, in 1925, leaving most of the mountain Assyrians dispossessed of their ancestral homes: the settlement problem is basic. A very interesting chapter might be written, if all the materials were available, on real and supposed British promises to the Assyrians; they form at least a part of the basis of the defiance of the Iraqi Government which has brought things to their present pass. Another basic factor, because it has strongly influenced both the policy of the Assyrians' leaders and the outlook of the people, is the fact that perhaps a majority of the young men of this milet have served at one time or another in the Levies. Mar Shimon has felt that he has had an army of ten thousand of the best soldiers in Iraq to back his claims; it is hardly credible that even he could have proceeded as he has, except on the basis of this idea, tho the event proved him wrong. And it is inevitable that those who have had little real training other than in the army should have the military mind, and should take it for granted that the natural and right way to settle a matter is by appeal to arms. I call these basic factors to mind because they go far to explain what has happened, tho I hold that the sad events of recent weeks were unnecessary and inexcusable.

I cannot say certainly when the patriarchal policy that has brought such disaster was formulated, but I saw no evidences of it before the arrival of Rassam and Cope about the first of 1930. I do not mean that the house of Mar Shimon had cooperated with Government until that time; but the huge promises of British support for a revived Assyrian Empire under Mar Shimon seem to have crystalized the ambitions of Surma Khanum for temporal authority and made them into a set purpose, regardless of the welfare of the Assyrian people. In her own words, spoken about Easter, 1931, "We will be kings or we will be killed." The hidden deception in that declaration is now brought to light: the first we means the house of Mar Shimon, the second, the helpless and innocent people. The Levies affair of June, 1932, revealed something of the nature of the patriarchal policy; the journey of Mar Shimon to Geneva, and his subsequent defiance of Iraqi authority, made it quite evident: the acquisition of Assyrian autonomy under Mar Shimon, and determined opposition to any movement that would prevent it, counting on British support in case of extreme need. And the certainty of British support was based partly on the promises made by Cope and partly on a grotesque idea of the importance to Britain of having the Assyrians happily settled in Iraq. Only with this policy in mind can one explain the repeated threats to emigrate and the final mad dash to Syria; and the constant and determined refusal of Mar Shimon to cooperate with Iraqi authorities, even when most generous terms were offered to him; and his violent opposition to ~~knwaxk~~ the efforts of those Assyrians who wished to be loyal Iraqis. It is hardly conceivable that he would have deliberately spoiled the chances for the Assyrians to settle in Iraq unless he had believed in ultimate British intervention, in his favor.

Perhaps the best evidence that Mar Shimon was not forced into the obstructionist position he has held in relation to the Government of Iraq, except by the motive of personal aggrandizement, is the fact that a large body of the Assyrians have found it possible to cooperate with Government. For the moment their position is shadowed by the notable victory that the patriarchal policy won at Semeil, with the aid of Muslim fanaticism and personal spite: the slaughter of innocent Assyrians. And there is danger that this victory will so dishearten those Assyrians who have been loyal to Iraq that their position in this country will become impossible. But I hope that wise counsels of moderation will prevail, both in Government and among Assyrians, and that the good work of settlement begun will be carried to a happy consummation. The definite break with the patriarchal policy (a difficult thing among a people so devoted to tradition) dates, I should say, from June, 1932. The movement away from the patriarch and toward cooperation with Government in temporal affairs developed rapidly. It is hard to give figures, but I should say that at least half of the Assyrians were ready to deal with Government on terms of mutual confidence, when recent events interrupted the normal course of affairs. Whether that mutual confidence can be restored or not remains to be seen; it will be with difficulty that either will be persuaded to believe the other.

Settlement has been a basic issue. Assyrians could not be expected to become contented and loyal Iraqis without assurance of security of their rights as owners or tenants of lands, as eligible persons to all forms of employment, and as participants in all benefits of Government. The type of life they are accustomed to is that of villagers engaged in agriculture and sheep-raising; so the land question was paramount. Settlement has been taking place ever since 1920, but has never been completed; the matter was brought to a focus by the arrival in the spring of Major Thomson, appointed by the Government to work on this problem. At that time Mar Shimon was in Baghdad defying the ministers of Government, refusing to renounce his claims to temporal authority over his people; so he was in no mood for cooperation with Major Thomson. When he reached Mosul and the villages, he found a surprising number of Assyrians that refused to talk about settlement so long as Mar Shimon was detained in Baghdad; and by others, prompted by patriarchal propaganda, absurd claims were made, such as that Government was obligated to acquire, by purchase or otherwise, sufficient and suitable lands for all Assyrians and to give it to them in freehold gratis. Others, however, acted reasonably, and the work of settlement was proceeding until interrupted by the activities of one Yaku, son of Malik Ismail of Upper Tiari, and a small group with him, who, since leaving the Levies, had been idle. They defied Government authority and said that the orders of Mar Shimon were what they acted upon. Yaku and his group of armed men went about the country stirring up discontent, and was called to book for disturbing the peace. He refused to come, and there was a very tense situation for some days. At last Col. Stafford, in the hope of saving the villagers, went to the village where Yaku was and gave him his personal safe conduct to Mosul, where a guarantee of £2000 for good conduct was required, and was furnished by Mr. Panfil. It was a blow, presaging disaster, to learn of the reaction to this incident among the patriarchal party. Col. Stafford had risked his life at the hands of the Assyrians and his position with the Iraqi Government in order to try to save the lives of innocent villagers who would be

implicated; Mr. Panfil risked (and has forfeited, I think) his property to try to bring peace; and the Mar Shimonite comment was, "See, the British will not let us down, no matter what we do." But the immediate danger of armed conflict was averted, and we ~~all~~ hoped for a peaceful solution. One thing that lessened the probability of it was the attitude taken by fanatical Muslims in Mosul and Baghdad. There was, no doubt, some genuine fear on their part of what the Assyrians might do; most of it was propaganda to the effect that these savage Assyrians, armed by the British to threaten the sovereignty of Iraq, must at all costs be immediately disarmed. This was retailed by rumor to the Assyrians as a definite Government policy to disarm them; and that, to them, was the same as pronouncing their death sentence at the hands of the Arabs and Kurdish tribesmen among whom they lived. From then on, mutual suspicion between Government and the patriarchal party increased, and rumors of all kinds multiplied at an amazing rate. In order to try to bring order out of the chaos that was rapidly developing, Government called into conference at Mosul about a hundred of the leaders of the Assyrians, including all shades of opinion, to make a definite statement of policy and to try to get a definite acceptance or refusal from the Assyrians. Iraq promised to arrange ~~for~~ settlement for all unsettled Assyrians in as good places as might be available without dispossessing present inhabitants, and to assist the orderly emigration of any who did not care to accept the terms offered. The conference split into two about equal parts, one accepting the terms, the other saying that Mar Shimon was their agent and they would not conduct negotiations except thru him.

After that conference, Yaku and some of the other leaders of the Mar Shimon party said they were going to Baghdad to consult the Patriarch; the next that was known of them was their presence in northeastern Syria, just across the Tigris from Peish-khabur. The word was spread from there that the destiny of the Assyrians was with the French; and from nearly every village at least a few of the young men shouldered their rifles and went to join Yaku. From many villages, especially those of Upper Tiari and Tkhuma, everyone went except the old men, the women, and the children. This was the strangest move of all -- to leave their crops, their flocks, their houses, and their families unprotected from the Arabs and Kurds -- and is quite inexplicable except as sheer madness or as a symptom of their basic belief that, in an extremity, British forces would protect them. These Assyrians are described by Iraqi press dispatches as rebels and insurgents, but I do not think those words accurately describe them. They were dupes of Mar Shimon and his agents, who told them that they were about to be disarmed in Iraq, and that Government had said that anyone who wished might leave the country, and this was the way to do it. The history of those days is undoubtedly known to you from press reports. I do not know how many Assyrians are now in Syria nor what is being done about them, nor how many took to the mountains, nor how many of those remain, or were killed, or surrendered. Accurate information is hard to get; the kind that is available is, in general, not worth passing on. This I do know: all or nearly all of the Assyrians' villages in the plain have been looted, some with loss of life; ~~all or~~ nearly all of those in the mountains are still secure. Most of the looting was done by Arabs and Kurds; most of the killing was done by the army, with how much of connivance with the civil authorities is not yet known, and may never be. It is significant that after the battle of Peish-khabur, no casualties have been reported by the army.

The massacre at Semeil is known to you. There were probably a few "rebels" in the village at the time, that is, those who had crossed over to Syria, and had gotten back. But nearly all were those ^{who} had been loyal to Government and were present there ~~xxxxxx~~ in obedience to Government order, having been told to come in from the surrounding villages for protection. They were all without arms, and were shot down in cold blood by the army. Such an exhibition of stark savagery and frenzied fanaticism has seldom been seen. In addition to this, I know not how many innocent people were taken from their homes in Dohuk, while I was there, and have not been seen since. How much of that kind of thing has been done in other places, I do not know. The situation seems quiet at present; whether there will be further outbreaks, I will not attempt to prophesy.

Yet some elements in the present situation that will affect the future can be discerned. One is that the reputation of the Assyrian warrior has vanished. Second, the tribes have seen with their own eyes that British armed forces, whether land or air, took no part in the recent operations. Third, old animosities between Muslims and Christians have been aroused and new ones created in recent months. Fourth (of local significance in the ~~at~~ Dohuk district only, unless it should spread) two of the Kurdish tribes have quarreled over spoil, and it would take only a small incident to set them upon each other. Fifth (a seemingly absurd thing, but nevertheless significant) there is a shortage of eligible Kurdish girls at present; a good bride costs about \$300; and whether the young Kurds would consciously start out to get brides by conquest or not, the situation does make them restive. Sixth, the Semeil massacre and similar events have gone far to destroy the confidence of the Assyrians and of other minority groups, especially Christians, in the good faith of the Government. Seventh, there seems not to be the personal integrity in the government services to form a stable administration. To be sure, we as Americans are not in position to throw stones; but the objective fact remains that corruption is the rule rather than the exception in this country, and that it is not condemned by any body of public opinion that is strong enough to check it. The outlook is not bright; the necessity for the work we are here to do is all the more evident.

What course Government will take, I cannot forecast. I am sorry that for the present they have chosen to deny the facts of the Semeil massacre; it does no good. I do not believe that it represented the will of Government, but rather a combination of blood-lust, cowardice, and personal animosities, which Government might rightly disown, putting the blame on those ^{who} took matters into their own hands, from whom the penalty should be required. This course would argue good faith; the present course casts suspicion upon it. It is not surprising that Government was extremely vexed with Mar Shimon and his party; the surprising thing is that it was so longsuffering with them. The ~~xxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ Patriarch's insolent defiance of the Iraqi ministers, and the attitude of smug superiority of the ex-Levies officers, ~~was~~ very galling to Iraqis. But those causes are now removed, with Mar Shimon in Cyprus and other leaders of that party away from the Mosul region; the Government may well be genuinely appreciative of the loyalty shown by many of the Assyrians in the recent crisis. It is, perhaps, not surprising that public feeling, led on by Muslim fanatics, should be violently antagonistic to Assyrians in general; but a discriminating government will display a more intelligent attitude toward them. One of the most dis-

couraging features of the situation is the strong feeling, especially in Mosul, against all Assyrians, whether loyal to Government or not. Many Assyrians employed in all kinds of work are being dismissed these days, for no reason other than that they are Assyrians. If Iraq is not further to damage her good name, such unfair treatment of loyal Iraqi Assyrians must cease forthwith.

What course the Assyrians will take is still harder to forecast. For one thing, they can no longer be treated as a unit. The defeated Mar Shimon party can hardly remain in Iraq, and the Iraqi party can hardly do other than remain. My guess is that those now in Syria are likely to remain there; if so, it will be a relief on our side of the border. But there are grave difficulties in the way of any Assyrians remaining in Iraq, not only because of the attitude of the Muslim populace and perhaps that of Government, but also on account of their own characteristics. They have, in general, both a deep-seated fear of the Muslim majority, whether Kurds or ARABs, and a keen sense of their own superiority. At Semeil was proved what fanatical Islam and irresponsible government are capable of, and it will not soon be forgotten. I do not know how many of them will remember that patriarchal policy invited it, and that a wise policy, which would have kept the door closed to it, was possible.

Was it possible? Only from the Christian standpoint. It was not possible to a mind informed by fear, distrust, and hatred of the Muslim. Without a basis of mutual confidence, Muslims and Christians are, I suppose, bound to come to some such relationship as that which prevails here today. Nationalism did not furnish such a basis; the Mar Shimon refused nationalization; in recent days all distinctions other than those of the traditional enmity of Islam and Christianity disappeared. Being a loyal Iraqi meant nothing at Semeil. Historically, right to the present moment, there is not the necessary basis of mutual confidence. And mine is a voice crying in the wilderness when I say that it can be established. I know no one in the local community, whether Christian or Muslim, who believes it, nor any of the British officials. Only if the Assyrians adopt the mind of Christ can the old vicious circle of mutual fear, distrust, and hatred be broken. Nothing short of the divine aggression will accomplish it: "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." That is invincible.

The Assyrians, tho Christian in name, have not taken the Christian course. I am sometimes sanguine enough to hope that those who refused the Mar Shimon lead will still take it; and if they do, there is no reason why they should not stay in Iraq, and every reason why they should: to demonstrate the Christian way where their compatriots have failed. Perhaps it is weakness of faith on my part, but I confess that the realistic view seems to be that they will not rise to the occasion. There remain, then, two major problems. First, the care of the widows and orphans recently made. A good many of them (those closely related to Levies men) have been brought to Baghdad by air and encamped at Hinaidi, the Royal Air Force station near Baghdad. The rest are in charge of Major Thomson, a man of excellent abilities and good will. How they are eventually to be fitted into the scheme of things is a difficult problem. The second is still greater in scope: if the Assyrians in Iraq are not ready to take the Christian course, recent events have made it practically impossible for them to stay here. Emigration is the only answer.

Both of these are fundamentally British problems. I have not any information as to how they are going to be solved by them, but you will be able to get that by other means than by my writing. If it were in the hands of the group of administrators and advisers that I have known here, I should not doubt that a wise solution would be reached. But this will go to London and Geneva, where there cannot be such a background of understanding, and where ~~France~~ France will have a hand in it, on account of the connection with Syria. I have a profound distrust of French colonial policy. In spite of Iraqi denials, the main features of the facts will be known, and they cannot be entirely overlooked. Protests ought to be made. But I do think that armed intervention would have a reaction in this country opposite to that desired, unless the League or some country appointed by it is ready to step in and establish a complete foreign administration. After all, the independent status of Iraq has been recognized; it must be responsible for its own internal affairs, whether it does well or ill. Any effective appeal must be to the Iraqi conscience.

Mr. Badeau's letter to Dr. Chamberlain will give you a digest of the facts, and I understand that Mr. Willoughby has also written. I hope you will see the reports sent in by Mr. Panfil to his board; I should like to, but have not had the opportunity.

All of us keep well. I am finishing this a few minutes before Miss Honse sets out on her homeward journey, taking it with her to avoid the postal censor.

With sincere regard,



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Ratun

with flowers

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R. O. Cumberland

507

FILING DEPT.
30-11
1933
SECRETARIES

OCT 18 1933

Dohuk, Iraq, 25.9.33.

Dear Doctor Speer:-

Ans. It will be a month tomorrow since I last wrote; tempus has done its favorite little trick! We drove to Mosul from Baghdad on the eleventh, and up here on the fourteenth; both trips were without incident. Autumn has arrived, and we are very happy to be at home again. We are keeping quite fit, tho exercise is something of a problem these days; it is not feasible to wander at large as formerly.

We were all shocked and grieved at the death of King Faisal. He had a grasp of the situation that was really notable. But we hope that his son and his advisors will carry on in the development of the immense possibilities of Iraq.

My last letter (dated 26 August) was hastily done, and some revision of it is needed. The only gross error I have noted is on p.3; Mr. Panfil's guarantee of Yaku was for \$ £200, not £2000. Sorry; my typist is rather a washout. (Mr. Panfil, by the way, packed his goods and left some time ago, before the government order for his expulsion was executed.) The other revision I wish to make is an addition. On p. 5, the second paragraph gives some elements in the present situation that seem to me significant. The list is by no means exhaustive, but by all means there should have been included the fact that the prestige of the Iraq Army is very high at present -- in contrast to its former position in the public mind. It seems strange that with all the talk of peace there is these days, the army is the determining factor in the affairs of a great many nations. ~~xxxx~~ I do not think that is the case here in Iraq, but I should say that the tendency is in that direction. Another item: it seems to me there is grave danger that the affairs of Iraq become a sort of football in international politics. We have a difficult situation here; no one will deny that. But the way to deal with it is on its own merits, according to reason, not sentiment, and for the welfare of all the people involved, not of one party. What I am afraid of is that the representatives of the western world will get together at Geneva and swallow whole the propaganda that Mar Shimon puts out (never dreaming that a patriarch of an ancient church might misrepresent the situation) and, with sobbing sentimentality will set out to avenge the wrongs of their "Christian" brother. The Muslims are our brothers, too; and vengeance is God's business, not ours. Geneva, by attempting to force anything on Iraq, would be doing essentially the same kind of thing that they condemn Iraq for doing to a minority. As I said in my former letter, an effective appeal must be to the Iraqi conscience.

We have not written much in recent months, and it may be that our relatives and friends have addressed inquiries to you about our situation. I'm sorry to ~~xx~~ add to your already heavy burdens: but I trust you have reassured them, and have given to our supporting churches at Summit and Peekskill some idea of our situation, as gathered from my former letter. But I hope that what I write may be kept out of publication; it is not my intent to mix in politics.

With warmest regards from us both,

Ever sincerely,

R. O. Cumberland

P. O. Box

JOHN B. KEENA
6265 KINCAID ROAD
CINCINNATI, OHIO

019

OCT 14 1933

Oct. 12, 1933.

Ans.

Dr. Robert E. Spear
New York City -

MAILING DEPT.
1455
1933
SECRETARIES

My dear Dr. Spear:

I appreciate your kind letter of the seventh. Ever since I heard of this sad news from Mesopotamia I have been trying to get a direct word from Mosul, but thus far I have not received a message from my father, and, consequently, I have been very anxious about the situation in Iraq. It is strange that none of us has received a single line from the folks at Mosul or Baghdad.

✓
JOHN B. KEENA
6265 KINCAID ROAD
CINCINNATI, OHIO

I do not understand just what happened and why. It seems that as soon as the British authorities withdrew officially from the Mandated Territory, the Iraqi army attacked our poor people. But I do not wish to condemn the Iraqi troops until I have heard the whole story.

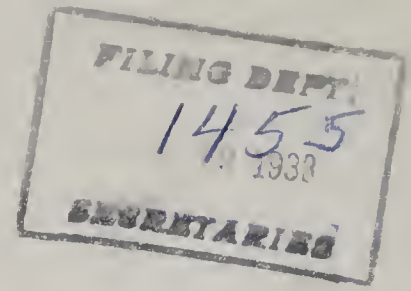
Our people in Chicago are frantic and in their distress have appealed to you for help. The only thing that we can do is this: let us proceed under your direction to appeal

JOHN B. KEENA
6265 KINCAID ROAD
CINCINNATI, OHIO

for unofficial representations
to the British government
through our ambassador at
London in an effort to stop
the repetition of such atrocities.
I am ready to do anything I can
through our congressmen here
in Cincinnati whom I know
you will. Do you think this
is practical? Sometimes such
unofficial appeals are even more
effective than direct and public
action.

I know that no one has greater
sympathy for our people than you
have, and our hearts - all of us -
go out to our poor West Indian people
in their seemingly endless distresses
and sorrow.

Respectfully yours,
John B. Keena



October 19, 1933

Mr. John B. Keena,
6265 Kincaid Road,
Cincinnati, Ohio.

My dear John:

I have just got back from attending some of our Synod meetings and write at the first opportunity in reply to your good letter of October 12th. I don't see why you shouldn't carry out your suggestion of speaking to your Congressman and asking him to make inquiries at the State Department in behalf of the Assyrians here in America and their deep anxiety on account of their kindred in Iraq.

Our last letter from Iraq is from Mr. Cumberland, dated September 25th and indicating that he is back in Dohuk. He says that he drove up from Bagdad to Mosul on the 11th and from there to Dohuk on the 14th, and that his trips were without incident. He does not say anything in this letter about the situation except to report that Mr. Penfil has left Mosul. He does not seem to see anything that can be done except to appeal to the conscience of the Iraqi government.

I shall be consulting Dr. Chamberlain very shortly and I think it would be well if he also would make inquiries of our State Department in the name of our United Mission in Mesopotamia.

With warm regard,

Your sincere friend,

RES:B

The following statement is found in the November 23rd, 1935 report of the European Central Office for Inter-Church Aid in Geneva:

"The Assyrians. The Nestorian Assyrian refugees in Irak, ca. 35!000, seemed to be lost when the outbreak of a massacre showed the hostility of the Mohammedan population and of the army, and when the attempts to find a home for them in South America, British Guyana, Canada had failed. Now suddenly a happy solution has been found by the Commission of the League of Nations for the settling of the Assyrians. A project has been elaborated which foresees the settling of the Assyrians in the region of the Ghab between Beyrouth and Aleppo. 6'000 are already settled provisionally on the Khabur. The expenses of 82 millions French Francs are already covered up to the sum of 73 millions, being contributions from the British, the French and the Irakian government and the League of Nations. The League of Nations will be accomplishing here a work of settling a whole people which will be to its permanent glory. A special gratitude is also due to the British government which has been made responsible formerly to a large extent for the misery of the Nestorian Assyrians. The European Central Office in Geneva granted relief to Assyrian refugees groups on the Lebanon, in Irak and Southern France since many years and was in continuous contact with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Mar Shimun and the Commission of the League of Nations, which should be congratulated on this happy solution of a thorny problem. The special Sub-Committee for Assyrians which we had formed four years ago contemplated the issuing of a call to the Churches to give a church to the new Nestorian colony and perhaps the school. The Archbishop of Canterbury has evidently the same idea, and we offered cooperation in the Protestant Churches which are affiliated to our Office, leaving, of course, the precedence to the Archbishop because the Church of England considers the oriental Church in a special way as their pupils."

The following report is from the November 6th, 1935 issue of the International Christian Press and Information Service of Geneva:

"A Remarkable League of Nations Achievement.
The Protection of the Assyrian Christians of Iraq
and their Transfer to the Plain of the Ghab.
(territory of the Levant under French Mandate).

"Christian circles have been repeatedly disturbed by the precarious and perilous situation of the Assyrian Christians of Iraq, threatened with extermination, and they have intervened on their behalf with the League of Nations, asking that protection may be assured.

"It is therefore worth drawing the attention of these same circles to the important decisions taken by the recent Assembly of the League of Nations, which solve in a definite and absolutely satisfactory manner, the problems of the establishments of the Assyrian Christians of Iraq.

"After a period of study and the despatch of several missions, and after diplomatic negotiations which revealed, on the part of most governments, a very clear sense of their responsibilities, the settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq, in the plain of the Ghab has

been definitely decided upon. In order to facilitate this settlement, the Assembly of the League of Nations has included in its budget for 1936 a sum of 1,300,000 francs. Added to the contribution from the Government of Iraq, from Great Britain and from the authorities of the territory of the Levant, and to grants from private associations and from those principally concerned, this sum will enable the Assyrians of Iraq to be settled in the region of the Ghab. The total expenditure anticipated for these operations amounts to some 17,000,000 Fr., which will be paid in the course of the next few years as the need arises, under the auspices and with the participation of the League of Nations.

"The plain of the Ghab is adequate for the settlement of from twenty to twenty-five thousand people. Large scale works will however be necessary, and while they are being carried out the majority of the Assyrians will be settled on an estate of 8,500 hectares or on other land in the neighborhood, where they will be able to grow cereals or graze their flocks. Provisional establishments will be made. Five dispensary-infirmaries will be created and it is proposed also, if funds permit, to build a hospital of from 80 to 100 beds. As soon as the works are finished, permanent settlement will take place in the plain of the Ghab itself, where permanent villages will have been built in the meantime. These will take the form of centres accommodating from 2,500 to 4,000 inhabitants, and will be an improvement on scattered villages, since they will facilitate the installation of non-agricultural elements, such as artisans and shop-keepers, will reduce the number of schools, churches, hospitals and dispensaries to be built, and will thus cut down overhead charges.

"Plans of a very precise nature, taking the customs of the people concerned into account, are in hand as regards the administration, education, and the civil, religious and political status of the Assyrians. They will be received as permanent colonists in the mandated territory of the Levant and naturalised at a date to be fixed in agreement with the Council of the League of Nations and after a period which in principal should not be less than 5 years.

"A special organ will have charge of the direction of the settlement operations, working under the authority of the Council of the League of Nations, and in close liason with the High Commission for the mandated territories of the Levant.

"Such, in broad outline, are the decisions of the League of Nations. They constitute a remarkable demonstration of its effectiveness in the social and humanitarian domain."

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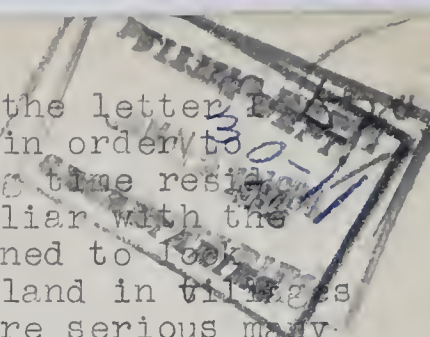
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E. W. Mc Howell



Dear Dr. Speer: I am constrained to add a postscript to the letter I have just written you re the Assyrian-Iraq affair; this, in order to give you another version of it by a friend of mine, along time resident of Bagdad, ~~not~~ ^{and not a missionary} a native of the east, intimately familiar with the Assyrians; together with an English army physician assigned to look after them in an official effort to settle them on the land in villages in the Mosul Area; much of the land proved barren and, more serious, many of the village sites proved to be saturated with malaria; an epidemic of malignant malaria broke out among the Assyrians, hundreds dying of it. I personally visited these villages, cooperated with these two good men; I found villages in which 100% of the inhabitants were sick, we having to administer quinine as we went from village to village. The English army physician was remarkably devoted in his ministrations contracted malignant malaria and died. His companion was equally devoted. It is he whom I quote in a verbal statement made in Bagdad to personal friends of mine especially intended for me because of our past relationship and interest in these people.

Howell
1922-23

I condense his statement but do so with strict adherence to the facts:

The Government determined to settle the Assyrians on the land; issued its plan for doing so; this plan was not acceptable to the Assyrians and they said so; the Government gave an ultimatum, "Accept what is offered or get out." The Assyrians retorted, "We will get out." A body of the Assyrians, armed, crossed the northern border of Iraq into French mandate territory to seek settlement there; they were first disarmed but after a conference their arms were returned and they started back to gather together their possessions and their families for a migration into Syrian territory. They were preparing to "get out". The Government then declared the movement to be rebellion and sent regular troops against them near the border; there were pitched battles in which both sides suffered. The Kurds joined in as supporting the troops; then independently attacked Assyrian villages in the neighborhood of Semail and Duhuk whose people were in no way connected with the movement toward Syria; there was unprovoked massacre of some hundreds of innocent Christians, who were in no way involved in the settlement dispute or the migratory movement.

This is the version of the affair sent to me by a competent and honest and disinterested witness.

The epidemic of malignant malaria referred to is an important factor to be kept in mind as prejudicing the Assyrians against some of the sites offered them for settlement: It was a horrible experience.

It should be said that the English officer referred to above made an official report of the epidemic which I was privileged to read; it fully justifies the fears of the Assyrians. Doubtless this medical report could be secured of the government in London.

The following factors in this case explain the attitude and actions of the Assyrians: Barrenness of soil; Malarious conditions; Dispersion of the Christians in such wise as to imperil their property and lives; The hereditary enmity aggravated by the war and its aftermath. Last and not least a Highlander spirit of independence saturated with a religious sentiment which had enabled them to maintain a semi-independence enduring for many generations among their beloved rocks of Kurdistan; a passionate attachment to a habitat and manner of life.

E. W. Mc Howell

December 8-1933.

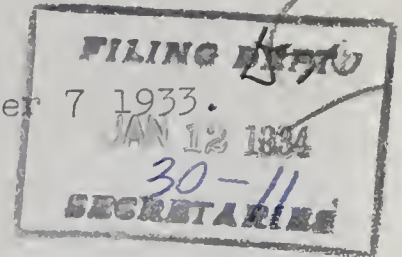
F. E. Speer

E. W. Mac Dowell

DEC 11 1933

216-2nd Street north
St. Petersburg, Fla.

December 7 1933.



Dr. Robert E. Speer, Sec.
156 Fifth Avenue, New York City, N.Y.

My dear Dr. Speer:

I have just today received through Dr. Wishard your letter to Mrs. Rankin with its enclosure from Mr. Willoughby re the Assyrian trouble. I note the date of your letter and your expressed wish that the letter be returned to you promptly. I am therefore sending it to you directly instead of via Wooster.

It is unnecessary for me to say with what deep interest I have read this statement of the Assyrian - Iraq affair. Mr. Willoughby has stated it as he honestly sees it. But I feel that it can be stated with less reflection on Mar. Shimon and the Assyrians and with fuller harmony to all the facts involved, - important facts relating to their recent history and having important bearing upon this catastrophe. Misjudgement of an individual is a serious matter; misjudgement of a people is even more serious. Undoubtedly there have been sins and errors of judgement to be rightly charged up against the Assyrians and their leaders; and just as undoubtedly they have been sinned against, grievously sinned against during this period of the great war, and that not only by Arab and Kurd but more seriously by the great powers on whom must rest final and heaviest responsibility. Only God can mete out justice to them.

Thanking you for the privilege of reading this statement,

Sincerely yours,

E. W. Mac Dowell

R. E. Foster

Confidential

The Summer of 1933.

W. W. [unclear]

FILING DEPT
30-11
30-11

During the past few months, while I have been busy mainly with building operations, events have transpired which have become important, and even exciting; it will be well if I set down a few things now for your reading.

You have often heard us refer to the Assyrians, the group of Christians which came into Iraq at the end of the War, as a result of having been driven out of their homes in Persia and Turkey; some of our best friends are among them, and we have always been interested in their welfare. After a few years residence in Iraq, most of those originating in Persia got back to their former homes; and, while many of them are not happy, in general they have fared well enough. Those whose former homes were in Turkey have not been able to get back except for very short periods, and all hope is now gone that they can ever do so. It seemed to us the wise course for these people to settle down in Iraq,--let all be settled on land who could farm, and let all accept jobs who could get them. A very large proportion of the people themselves came to accept this conclusion, more or less willingly; but there have always been a few leaders cherishing the idea that their folk might remain a homogeneous mass, whether in Iraq or in any other country, and always keep their old language, customs, and even tribal organization. To us there seemed no reason why all this should be kept up, except that thereby said leaders could keep their former positions of power; their motive, therefore, for striving to preserve the Assyrian culture seems largely a selfish one.

Their ends have been pursued persistently, even when unwisely. If any individual Englishman expressed a favorable opinion of their abilities, or said that they should have such and such rights, they would immediately seize upon that statement as an official promise and lay their plans on the basis of British sponsorship. They have tried working through other foreign powers also. Scheme after scheme was brought up for their settlement in some other country than Iraq, where they profess to be unable to trust the Moslem majority, and in which they say they can never enjoy complete security. But any person reasonably informed on current history, knows that there are no countries in the post-War days seeking colonists who do not wish to amalgamate with the country as a whole. When emigration was declared impossible, and schemes were proposed for their remaining in Iraq, these leaders insisted on an amount of autonomy that no sovereign state is willing to grant, and they wanted said autonomy so hedged about with guarantees from the great Powers, that it all served the very purpose of making the Muslim majority distrust and dislike them, and worked decidedly against the growth of a friendly spirit between Assyrian and Arab such as might well have grown up between 1918 and 1933.

The leaders' schemes were so slow in bearing fruit that many individual Assyrians became established in Iraq, and felt less dependent upon Mar Shimon, their Patriarch. He kept his hold principally upon the soldiers in the Levies (referred to below) and the people who settled in the mountains of northern Iraq; for these persons were the more isolated from the central Government of Iraq, less connected with the Government by educational, industrial, social or political ties, and living under conditions more primitive,--permitting a survival of more of the old tribal system.

The situation was further complicated by the existence of the Iraq Levies, a body of hired troops (recruited exclusively from among Assyrians) under direct British leadership, and not controlled by the Iraq Government. At their largest they numbered more than five thousand men, out of a people of little more than fifty thousand altogether. The good pay which these soldiers drew contributed in no small measure to the financing of the people; but re-enlistments were common and a lot of the young men were diverted from learning trades or settling on farms or getting jobs or becoming acquainted with their non-Assyrian neighbors at the ages when they would naturally and easily have done all this. In such regards the Levies was a liability rather than an asset to the welfare of the people as a whole. Still worse was the political and social effect of the prolonged existence in the country of a fighting-force which was admittedly efficient and not under Government control; Arab pride was wounded, and Assyrian arrogance was fostered, and allowed to show itself in obnoxious ways. The Levies have been gradually reduced in number; they are now transposed into an especial guard of only fifteen hundred men; this, in turn, will eventually disappear; so that even this military organization might have passed away without any disastrous consequences had there not been active efforts to foment trouble between Assyrian and Arab. When a soldier was discharged from the Levies, he was allowed to keep his rifle and two hundred rounds of ammunition; this rule served to gradually build up a large reserve of ex-soldiers, well armed, and capable of being misused by unscrupulous leaders.* The true end of the Levies (although not their final disbanding) came about in the summer of 1932 in a very unpleasant manner. In attempting to gain certain immediate political ends, the Patriarch induced the Assyrian officers of the

(over)

say better than even they themselves had hoped), and so soon as it became evident that the insurgents were not to win quickly, it was just as evident that they could not win at all, for not only were the Government troops superior in numbers, but they also had the backing of supply trains, while the Assyrians had only the ammunition which they were carrying, and when that was exhausted it could not be replenished. At this stage there are reports of atrocities; one report which seems to have good foundation states that some Assyrians fired a tent full of Arab dead and shackled living prisoners. This is the crowning act of devilishness of which I have any knowledge.

The same persons who kept the Assyrian masses (so far as possible) estranged from their Arab and Kurdish neighbors; who by specious promises (reeking with falsity which cannot have been altogether unintentional) lured more than a thousand into crossing an international boundary under circumstances sure to cause their outlawry by Iraq; who devised treachery to force the whole band to fight under ~~circumstances~~ the impression that it was in self-defense, yet under circumstances which the Government could not but consider aggression; it seems highly probable that those persons now perpetrated an act or acts which would guarantee a terrible revenge from the Muslims, make it ~~hopeless~~ ^{impossible} for their followers to hope for any compromise, and thus steel them to resist to the last ditch. For some of the above statements there is documentary proof available, so that I feel confident in saying that the persons who did all this were Mar Shimon, his aunt, Surma, and those Maliks and other leaders who thought that their position would be strongest under a restoration of the old regime of the Assyrians, with Mar Shimon as Prince as well as Pope.

If the above is true, it helps a little in answering the extremely difficult question as to why the Assyrians so desperately provoked a war while their own families were left many days' march distant, among Arab and Kurdish tribes, the very confreres of the troops on whom they practiced treachery and atrocity. Three thoughts occur to me. (a) Perhaps the Assyrians thought that they were so far superior to the Arab army that they would annihilate it at once, recoup themselves with captured arms and ammunition, conquer all northern Iraq in a short time, and get foreign recognition, if not assistance, on the strength of a 'fait accompli.' (b) Perhaps there was no thought given to cause and effect; no consideration was given to the families simply because they were not in sight at the moment. (c) Perhaps the bulk of the men were led into the situation with no opportunity to protest against jeopardizing their families; and those who brought about the situation were heartless enough to care nothing for Assyrian lives, even in a struggle professedly for the establishment of an Assyrian nation.

The dispersal of the rebels took place steadily, even though not as speedily as one could have wished. Yakou seems to be among some who happened(?) to be driven across the border into Syria again. We are told that this time they are formally interned, and I hope that before they are set at large, the group can be combed over to secure all those against whom criminal action can properly be brought. Of course a large number of the insurgents have been killed; quite a few have been captured; and no doubt the majority have dispersed into the mountain fastnesses. I hope that most of the survivors will prove to be simple fellows who will work their way back to their families and consent to settle down in peace.

It was after the back of the open rebellion had been broken that events in other parts of the country began to grow serious. The affair was taxing the military resources of Iraq to the point of causing general concern, and patriotic statements began to be issued from all over the country; all too often these were accompanied by offers to assist the Government with irregular forces. Too much freedom was given to the press, and inflammatory statements played up the matter enough to cause a state of hatred out of all proportion to the original cause of concern ~~to~~ the Government. Emergency police were recruited among some Muslim tribes; and beyond that, plenty of assistance was available in the form of freebooting bands of tribesmen,--both Arab and Kurdish. Some say that certain local officials accepted such assistance, and a few even go so far as to say that they solicited it; but the central Government apparently did not favor any such.

Whatever may have been the official attitude generally, the tribes actually did get about among Assyrian villages and do a lot of looting, and wherever there is looting there is pretty likely to be killing. By the irony of fate the villages which held the families of the actual rebels seem to have suffered least from this tribal action, while the worst event of all was in an area whose Assyrian population was the most loyal of any area. There was a massacre of about 600 Assyrians in Simel. Possibly Simel was chosen as being Yakou's village,--he had lived there for not more than six months. I am not the one who can best describe the Simel incident in detail, but must say that those killed were probably 100% (certainly predominantly) from the group which had formally registered its loyalty to the Iraq Government, and repudiated Mar Shimon's political leadership; and these persons had just voluntarily surrendered their

arms to the Government officials. Someone is obviously much to blame for this slaughter of non-combatants, which even included a few women. I like to think (as there is strong reason to think) that it was a very small group, working by means unknown to higher Iraq authorities, and taking advantage of the presence of Arab and Kurdish looters of the most ignorant and ruffianly type. The great thing to be hoped is that this group will be brought to justice, so that the world will not tend to blame Iraq as a whole for the incident. Without condoning or excusing the terrible deed in any way, it cannot be said too often, however, that apparently it would never have happened had not matters been forced into such a distorted situation by the studied provocative policy of Mar Shimon.

Apparently public order is properly restored; we have reason to hope that there will be no further outbreaks, but there is still much to cause concern. Extreme tension developed all over Iraq. Muslims of the less responsible type began to mutter against all Christians as well as Assyrians in particular; looting occurred in many villages which were by no means exclusively Assyrian. Strenuous efforts on the part of the Government and the Muslim aristocracy are surely responsible in a large measure for preventing more general bloodshed. Good will which had been slowly and painstakingly built up in the years since the Great War has been sadly riddled and weakened. Mar Shimon has finally been deported, and is now in Cyprus; there are threats of discharging all Assyrians employed in Iraq; should these be carried out systematically, it will be a heavier blow in the long run than was the one massacre.

The Christians of Iraq, Assyrian and other sects alike, have become more cynical, less trustful, less willing to try to live as brethren with the Muslims. A severe storm has passed over the garden of Iraq, and it will be years before its scars can be overgrown.

Pray for the land, that justice be not lost from sight. That forbearance and even love be not lost, but regain their strength. Pray for the bereaved and distressed, of course; these events have increased them, and still more distress may occur if economic retaliation follows threats of physical violence. Pray for the Christians as a whole that they fall not away from their ideal of peacemakers, nor cease seeking first the Kingdom of God. For those Assyrians who conscientiously thought that obeying the Government was for their good, and have suffered thereby, that they may not lose all faith in God and man. Pray for those who have travestied the name of our religion by making it a cloak for political ends to be secured in the most heartless possible manner, that they may not be wholly reprobate, but come to know and manifest the love of Christ. Pray for us missionaries, that we may be forgiven if past neglect or shortcoming may have dulled our usefulness to humanity in this time of need. And that we may do more in the days to come, be they trying or peaceful.

The above does not claim to be scientifically accurate, but I believe that in matters of fact it is true in all important respects, and I hope that even the details are well-founded; in many cases one cannot be sure what the truth is in particular incidents. As to opinions expressed, I am entirely responsible for them; where they were not arrived at independently, they are chosen from other people's opinions to the best of my judgment.

This material is confidential and not for publication. I even ask that there be no publication of quotations from it in my name or that of our Mission or in any form where the writer might be easily identified.

Please feel free to show it to friends who are genuinely interested either in Iraq or the Assyrian people, or Oriental Christians in general, but do not let it pass into the hands of strangers.

In correspondence with any of us please use discretion in your statements, for it is likely that there will be censorship of outgoing and even incoming mail for some time to come. This will be posted by a friend outside Iraq, and therefore I have expressed myself more freely than I should have otherwise done.

Mr Trull has letter
for "Summer 1933" of
J. W. Willoughby - also
2 letters - Dec 7, 8 - from
E. W. McDowell -

Jan. 12, 1934

February 14, 1924

Dr. Robert L. Spear,
156 Fifth Avenue,
New York City.

Dear Dr. Spear,

We leave here tomorrow morning for Liverpool to sail in the evening by the "City of Siala" of the Elderman Line. We got our passport back only day before yesterday. It was vised only after referring the matter to Bagdad. We had to pay for the cabling. We also had to subscribe to the condition imposed that the two ladies would be willing to withdraw from Mosul on request of the authorities in case they considered it unsafe for them to remain. This included the Edwards who are now free to proceed to Mosul. The whole point of the delay apparently lay in a ruling that women were not to be allowed to go to Mosul under present conditions.

Let me report further on my errand here. I have had interviews with the following people interested in the matter of the protection of the Assyrians: The Archbishop of Canterbury; Mr. Oldham; Mr. Philip Kerr; Mr. H. Wilson Harris of the League of Nations Union; Sir John Spackburgh and Mr. Hall of the Colonial Office; Sir Percy Cox and Dr. MacGillivray.

On the whole I feel more optimistic than I did. The feeling seems to be prevalent that any withdrawal of the British is not imminent; steps had already been taken looking toward the safe guarding of the lives of the Christians, even considering the possibility of their following the British forces in the event of a withdrawal. It is most reassuring also to know that Sir Percy Cox, recently High Commissioner for Iraq, has been charged with the interests of the Assyrians in the negotiations with the Turkish Government over the question of the northern boundary of Iraq. These negotiations are now due but may be delayed by the Turks for several months and the whole matter may go into the League of Nations for a decision. This does not involve the withdrawal of the British.

Of course there is a sentiment in England demanding the immediate withdrawal of their forces from Mesopotamia and there is now a labor government. But those in a position to know assure me that there is little danger that the new government will press this matter. I have been told also that Mr. MacDonald would be very sympathetic toward these Christian people.

On the other hand I have come to feel that there might be important advantages accrue to the Assyrians if in some way they could be brought under the wing of the League of Nations, especially if America joins it. I have therefore drawn up roughly a plan to this end. I enclose a copy of it for you to pass judgment upon it. I have endeavored to make it as little as possible obnoxious to the Moslem powers and on the other hand have had in view the largest benefit possible for the Assyrians in territory and the safeguarding of their lives and other interests.

The feature of the three residents offers, of course, great difficulties but I consider it of great importance to the plan. They would be the intermediary through which the League could exert its influence and authority. I have ventured to use this argument in favor of - not necessarily my plan but of some action on the part of the League of Nations looking toward the preservation of this small minority, viz: that

such action on the part of the League would predispose many people at home to consider favorably any action of our government that would us into close association with the League of Nations. This argument has seemed to appeal to all with whom I have used it; especially Sir Percy Cox, Mr. Harris and the secretary at the Colonial Office. I should have said that ~~in~~ all these men have been most courteous and sympathetic and have manifested an interest in the Assyrians.

I took it upon myself to say to some of these men that I felt sure that you would be interested in the favorable consideration of some such plan as I have suggested and that you would use your good offices to forward such a matter, if it met the approval of the circle here who were nearest to the problem and more or less responsible for any steps taken for the preservation of the Assyrians.

One or two of them inquired whether the American government might possibly use its influence, perhaps indirectly, to induce the Turkish government to be generous in the matter of the northern boundary of Iraq which of course very materially affects the interests of our people. I gave a guarded answer to this, but expressed the opinion that if about that time the Turks were needing something very badly from the American people or government that, possibly, directly or indirectly such generosity to these people might be claimed as a condition of meeting their desires.

In view of the fact that there seems to be such an optimistic spirit here with reference to the persistence of the British in Mosul, I have not arranged with any one definitely to present this plan to the League of Nations or to press the matter. I have presented it to the group most interested in the Assyrians and if they find anything in it that will stand between this people and destruction it will be up to them to make use of it. This would refer, especially to the Archbishop, Sir Percy Cox and Mr. Harris.

If they do present the case of the people to the League of Nations, I am sure you will do all you can personally and through others to bring public sentiment to bear upon our government to do its part in this worthy cause. Perhaps the Near East Relief through its widespread organization might induce a general and influential petitioning of Congress by letters to consider the cause of these Christians as a factor in their attitude toward the League of Nations.

We have had a very pleasant visit here with Miss Martin who came a hundred miles to see us.

Very cordially,

(signed) E. W. McDowell.

A SUGGESTED PLAN
FOR THE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF THE ASSYRIAN CHRISTIANS IN THE
EVENT OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE BRITISH FROM MOSUL.

1. THE PEOPLE CONCERNED: THE ASSYRIAN CHURCHIANI:
A remnant of the ancient Church of the East. Within the first few centuries preached the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout Asia - Mesopotamia, Persia, India and China; established noted schools, translated, multiplied and distributed the Scriptures together with commentaries on them; until the eighth century rivaled the Church of the West in the number of its converts from heathenism, in its church organization, in its schools and in its Christian literature.

This Church overwhelmed by the rising flood of Islam in the seventh century and following; all but annihilated because of its refusal to accept Islam; this small remnant found a refuge in the almost inaccessible valleys of central Kurdistan; for a thousand years, in the heart of these wild mountains, surrounded by hostile and fanatical Mohammedan Kurds and Turks they have remained steadfast in the Christian faith and have maintained a civilization higher than those of their neighbors around about them.

At the beginning of the war in spite of every effort to draw them to the side of the Central Powers, after full consideration of the cost, they definitely cast in their lot with the Allies and throughout the entire war served the Allied Cause with great courage and efficiency. Through the fortunes of war they suffered the loss of their ancestral homes, their property, and the lives of half their people; they were swept out of their country into exile and have been living the life of refugees until this present time.

THEIR LOCATION:

Their ancestral home in central Kurdistan; a circle with a radius of one hundred miles having its center at the town of Julamerk would enclose the heart of the Assyrian country and the majority of its people.

THEIR PRESENT LOCATION:

A line of villages, deserted by their former inhabitants from various causes, stretching along the Sacho-Buhak-Akra Line, the present indefinite northern border of Iraq, about forty or fifty miles north of the city of Mosul; a smaller part of them have pushed on into the foot hills of their own mountain district.

2. THE PERIL THAT THREATENS THESE ASSYRIAN PEOPLE:
From the time of their great flight in 1916 these people have been succored, fed and preserved by the British forces occupying Mesopotamia. In return for these great benefits their young men have given themselves for military service in guarding the northern borders of Iraq. Largely because of this service the Assyrians have drawn upon themselves the bitter animosity of Kurds, Arabs and Turks occupying that general territory. THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE BRITISH FORCES FROM MOSUL WOULD IMPERIL THE VERY EXISTENCE OF THE ASSYRIAN PEOPLE. Whether Arabs or Turks rule over them there will be imminent danger of massacres and forcible deportation, and sooner or later final extinction as a people. Their Moslem neighbors outnumber them many fold and hate them with bitter and fanatical hatred.

3. POSSIBILITIES OF ESCAPE FROM THIS THREATENED PERIL.

- A. WHOLESALE EMIGRATION: Apparently only Argentina and Brazil are open to them. Many difficulties; deemed by many impracticable.
- B. UNARMED SELF PROTECTION: Arm them and leave them to fight it out for themselves; commit them to paper promises on the part of Arabs and Turks. Impossible: Past experiences have proved the worthlessness of such promises; the Assyrians themselves are independent and warlike, ready to resent injury

an insult, given to reprisals; occasions for conflict would inevitably arise between the two people; a weak government could not suppress these feuds and conflicts, would probably promote them. A plausible pretext for a war of extermination would easily be found. In spite of their valor the Assyrians would eventually be suppressed if not annihilated.

WITHOUT SOME OUTSIDE POWER THE PRESERVATION OF THE ASSYRIAN CHRISTIANS SEEMS TO BE IMPOSSIBLE.

3. SELF PROTECTION UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.
The plan suggested accepts this as a possibility.

4. SOME FEATURES OF THE PLAN.

1. The plan presupposes that Iraq and Turkey join the League of Nations.
2. It concedes sovereignty over the Christians to the Islamic power under which the Christians may be living, Arab or Turk.
3. It does not place any Moslem population under Christian domination.
4. It aims to provide safeguards for the lives, property and vital interests of the Christian population and establishes means for the preservation of peace and goodwill between Moslem and Christians dwelling together in the same territory.

THE SUGGESTED PLAN.

LET THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

1. Fix the boundaries of the Assyrian people, to the full extent possible within their ancestral territory.
2. Organize from among the Assyrians an administrative body to have jurisdiction over Christians only.
3. Define the relationship of the Assyrians and their administrative body to the ruling powers.
4. Organize a police system under the authority of the Administrative body for the maintenance of peace and order and with provision for its use in case of necessity for self protection.
5. Place its sanction upon three RESIDENTS TO BE CHOSEN FROM outside the Assyrians; one Moslem and two Christians.

THESE RESIDENTS:

- A. To be nominated by the League of Nations.
- B. But subject to the vote of the Christian Administrative body and the ruling Moslem power.
- C. THEIR PURPOSE: To work together to promote peace and goodwill, to serve as reporters for the League of Nations to keep it informed as to conditions and needs, to make known to the Administrative body the will of the League of Nations, to act when called upon to do so as mediators between the two classes of people.

D. THEIR POWERS: Only advisory, reportorial and mediative.

6. Arrange a system of finance to meet the expenses of the Administrative body; the Police System and the Residents.
7. Provide for the freedom of the ecclesiastical organization in the practice of religion and in the education of the children.

Russell Carter

THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U. S. A.
156 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

MAY 27 1933

MEMORANDUM

FROM Mr. Carter

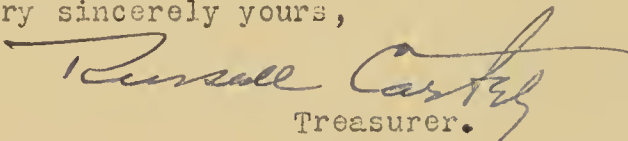
May 24th, 1933.

TO Dr. Speer

Dear Robert:-

In reply to your memorandum of May 15th regarding the \$23,475.06 standing over from the war time to be used for the benefit of the Assyrian people, may I say that we should be very glad to have this used as is determined to be best. My only question is as to whether it is wise even in confidential correspondence with these three men on the field to state that the sum represents Persian Money Orders which were never cashed. Perhaps you can refer to the credit in some other way.

Very sincerely yours,


Treasurer.

RC/GAC

To
The State Department,
Washington, D.C.

This memorandum is written at the suggestion of Mr. Dulles, Chief of the Near East Division of the Department of State.

Its purpose is to call attention to one of the small minorities of the Near East. They are a small body of Christians, called Assyrian and Nestorian, whose immemorial home has been in the region lying between Mosul in the west and Lake Urumia on the east. The Turko-Persian border divides them into two classes; those who have been until recently Turkish subjects and those who have been, and are, subjects of Persia.

This memorandum will refer to each of them in turn.

I. The Assyrian or Nestorian Christian community until recently subject to Turkey:

These people are highlanders dwelling for the greater part in the mountains of Kurdistan. They are a hardy race, lovers of freedom, and tenacious of their Christian faith. The religious and ecclesiastical leadership are combined in one man called Mar-Shimon, Patriarch, a hereditary title.

This entire region embraced between the Tigris River and the Persian Border opposite Mosul with its Moslem and Christian inhabitants came definitely under Turkish rule only as late as 1830. Before that time the government was vested in local chiefs called Beys, Amirs and Pashas. Mar-Shimon was one such local ruler, on a par with the others, regarded as inferior only because of the Christian faith of himself and people. According to the law of the Koran he and his people were required to pay a tax in token of their submission to Islamic rule. Aside from this tax their local autonomy was recognized by the neighboring Turkish clans. These mountain Nestorians, or Assyrians, from time immemorial have been a local self-governing, political unit. Their submission to the Turkish government since 1830 has been largely nominal. No Turkish tax collectors have ever been allowed to enter the strictly Christian area of the mountains. Mar-Shimon has always personally collected the tax imposed and has personally turned it over to the nearest seat of Turkish government.

In 1914, after the beginning of the war, Mar Shimon, by order of the Turkish Government, was summoned to Van for conference with the Valli Pasha, the Governor of that province.

He was informed of the approaching participation of Turkey in the war on the side of the Central Powers and he was asked what his position would be in that case; would he join Turkey and side with the Central Powers or would he take side with Russia and England?

The writer for thirty-five years has made his home with these mountain people and has been on intimate personal relations with Mar Shimon. In all that is herein stated he speaks from personal knowledge.

Mar Shimon's answer to the Turkish Pasha was to the effect that in so important a matter he could make no alliance without first consulting his people. On his return to the mountains Mar Shimon called together his people in a large assembly and laid before them the offers of the Turkish Government as over against the offers and promises of Russia. The question was debated pro and con for two days at the end of which time a vote was taken and all but unanimously it was decided to cast in their lot with the Allies. Mar Shimon gave official answer to this effect to the Turkish Government, thus placing himself and people officially in a state of war against the Turkish Government and on the side of the Allies. Hostilities on a small scale began almost immediately between the Christians and

the Turks.

The Russians in behalf of the Allies from the beginning of the war had sought the support of these mountain clansmen as a protection to their left flank. A definite promise was made to them that in return for their military service they should receive final and complete independence from Turkish or Moslem domination.

A plan of campaign was agreed upon between the Russians and Mar Shimon as follows: The Russian and Assyrian forces were to form a junction near Julamerk in the Assyrian territory on a certain date. This territory was to be occupied conjointly by the two forces throughout the war, as the retention of this territory was of strategic importance.

Second, at the close of the war this district which had been the home of these people for twelve hundred years, was to be ceded to the Assyrian Christians as their permanent home in which they were to be autonomous.

This plan was carried out so far as forming a juncture of the two forces was concerned. The Assyrians fulfilled their obligations to the letter and were first to arrive at the rendezvous. On the arrival of the Russian troops there was great rejoicing among the Christians in the belief that their district was thereafter to be under Christian rule. But on the very day of their arrival the Russian commander informed the Christian leaders that he was under orders to withdraw his troops to their lines in Persia. The Christians protested that this was contrary to the agreement made; that it would leave them helpless in the hands of the Turks. The Russian commander insisted that he must return at once. The Christians asked that ammunition be given them in order to withstand the attacks of the Turks. This was refused them. In spite of the protestation of the Christians that this withdrawal of the Russian force would probably result in the destruction of the Christians by the Turks and Kurds the Russian forces were withdrawn. The withdrawal of the Russians seems to have been utterly unjustifiable.

The Russians withdrew and left the Assyrians to fight it out alone with the Turks and Kurds who promptly moved to the attack.

For four months these Christian highlanders maintained themselves against the overwhelming forces sent against them by the Turks. By the fall of 1915, however, they were compelled, for lack of food and ammunition, to give up the unequal struggle. With their women, children and flocks they withdrew from their mountain valleys, fighting their way step by step, until they crossed the Turkish border into Persia where they joined their fellow Nestorian Christians on the plains of Salmas and Urumia, within the lines of the Russian army.

By this retreat the Assyrians abandoned the district they had occupied as their home from almost the beginning of the Christian Era, thus losing homes, fields and their churches, some of which were a thousand years old and dearer to them than their own lives.

II. We turn now to the other branch of these Assyrians or Nestorian Christians, those who for many centuries had made their homes on the fertile plains along the shores of Lake Urumia.

These Christians acknowledged the headship of the Nestorian Patriarchs in Turkey, just across the border, but dwelling on the Persian side of the border they regarded themselves, and were so regarded, as subject to the Persian Shah.

These people were unarmed and without any natural defense. For many centuries their condition among the surrounding Moslems was that of abject serfdom.

The people of Urumia therefore shrank from placing themselves in a position of antagonism to the local Moslem population with whom they would have to live.

But events proved to be too powerful to resist. The local Persian community themselves became aggressors against the Christians. At the very time \ddagger in 1918 when Mar Shimon was using his utmost endeavors to secure peace between the two elements the local Moslem leaders treacherously assassinated the Patriarch and later made an attempt to massacre the entire Christian population. This last was frustrated. The city fell into the hands of the Christians who magnanimously reinstated the Persian governor and divided the police force half and half with the Persian Moslems.

The entire Christian body, mountaineers and plains people, were thus forced to unite in organized form under British and French officers for the purpose of protecting the entire Christian community from destruction.

They were assured of British aid in money and equipment and of reinforcement from the British army then operating in Mesopotamia. The British, however, were slow in fulfilling their promises and this small force of Christians, practically unaided, held this point on the line and defended their own community from the fall of 1917 till the summer of 1918, against the regular Turkish troops and Kurdish and Persian irregulars. Thirteen times the attacks of these forces were repulsed. But as time passed and the promised aid and reinforcement failed to appear, discouragement weakened the morale of the Assyrians. In July, 1918, a British detachment was reported as having arrived at Sain Kala, the rendezvous agreed upon, about one hundred miles south of Urumia. The Assyrian leader with a strong guard started out to meet them and to receive the needed supplies. Just at that juncture the Turks on the north were reinforced and moved on Urumia City. That line of defense gave way and retreated to the city. This with the news of the departure of their leader which was misconstrued as a flight precipitated a panic. In a few hours the entire Christian population numbering some 80,000 men, women and children were in flight to the south towards Sain Kala and Hamadan. They were followed closely by Kurdish and Persian irregulars who hung upon their flanks picking off stragglers and in particular places massacring thousands, carrying off women and children into captivity.

The disorganized, terror-stricken mass of refugees finally reached Sain Kala where the small body of British troops sent out to succor them rendered most commendable service in their behalf driving back the Kurdish and Persian irregulars and acting as an escort for the Christians from Sain Kala to Hamadan.

It is important to note at this point certain charges made against these refugees by the Persian Government, viz. that in their march from Sain Kala to Hamadan they had committed serious depredations on the Kurdish villages between Sain Kala and Hamadan.

A claim for reparation was presented to the British for these damages.

With reference to these charges the following points should be noted:

1. There is a certain measure of truth in the charges made. Some villages were plundered and partly burned.
2. But there was gross exaggeration in the charges made by the Persian Government. This Sain Kala road had been traversed and fought over several times during the war by the Turks and Russians. Most of the damage which appeared to the eye was done by these contingent armies and not by the refugees.
3. Not in extenuation but by way of explanation, it should be remembered that with this great mixed multitude were the remnant of the Assyrian army. These sold-

-iers were disorganized and out of hand of their officers; they were sore from defeat; and embittered by the attacks made upon them in their flight by Kurdish and Persian irregulars. In 1915 the Kurds of this very region had overrun the Urumia plain, looting, destroying, burning, killing and carrying off women and children; many of their women were still in the hands of these very Kurds. They remembered these things. They had lost all, were hungry and being armed and mounted is it strange that they made reprisals upon their enemies? Would they not have been of much superior civilization than the English or Americans if they had refrained from reprisals?

The Persians themselves acknowledge that their women did not suffer at the hands of the refugees.

4. Very little if any of these depredations were committed by the plains-people of Urumia. Most of it was done by the wilder mountaineers and by irresponsible stragglers from Russia.

At Hamadan the refugees were taken in charge by the British military who gathered them into a well organized camp at Bakuba, thirty three miles northeast of Bagdad. Here they were well cared for by the English Government. Our American Near East Relief supplementing their efforts by grants of clothing and bedding and by special service along several other lines.

The writer and his wife were with the refugees during their camp life from 1918 to 1922.

In 1920 at the time of the general uprising in Irak against the English, there was a combined attack by Arabs and Kurds on the refugee camp at Bakuba. An easy victory was anticipated following which this strong force of some six or seven thousand Arabs and Kurds were to join in the general attack on Bagdad.

Only the presence of the Assyrian and Armenian young men who had seen service along the Urumia frontier saved the camp from destruction, and the check given to this strong force of Arabs and Kurds was undoubtedly an important factor in saving the English position in Bagdad.

The British armed the refugees at the beginning of the attack and for fifteen days they bore the brunt of the fighting as the British regulars, except for five machine guns, were drawn off for the defense of Bagdad. The Arabs and Kurds were finally defeated and driven off. They never reached Bagdad, thanks to the splendid fighting qualities of the Assyrians and Armenians.

During 1919 to 1922 the British made large use of these Assyrian and Armenian soldiers in defense of their position above Mosul.

In September 1920 immediately following the attack upon the camp of Bakuba, the camp was broken up, the Armenians being transferred to Nahrumar near Basra and the Assyrians to a new camp at Mindan near Mosul.

That same fall of 1920 the British encouraged the Assyrian refugees to make an effort to repatriate themselves. This courageous movement was foredoomed to failure because of the lateness of the season and the deep snows which had already closed the high passes.

The delay in making this movement was due to the Arab and Kurdish uprising. But the failure of the movement may properly be charged to British mismanagement and lack of good faith with the refugees themselves.

Following this collapse of the repatriation movement the camp at Sindan was broken up. A generous dismissal grant was made by the camp authorities and the camp was evacuated.

Here again the fortunes of the two sections of the Assyrian people must be followed separately.

1. The Persian Assyrians.

These people are passionately attached to their ancestral homes on the beautiful plains of Urumia.

During the entire period of their detention at Rakuba they continually beset the English authorities to restore them to their homes regardless of conditions. In 1921 when an effort was made to enroll all the young men of the camp in the British army the mountaineers readily acquiesced but the Persian Assyrians made very strong objections to enrollment on the ground that the terms they were required to sign obligated them to go wherever they were sent, and that for a term of years. They expressed willingness to sign up for the purpose of self-defense of their community and only until they were repatriated. Their one thought and determination was to get back home at the very earliest moment.

These Urumians, immediately on their release from the Sindan camp, turned their faces homeward. They repudiated all their recent leaders and their counsels for delay. Thus began one of the strangest and most pathetic movements in history. Seized and moved by a national home sickness these thousands of refugees without a head and without taking counsel of one another poured out of the camp and set out on the long, hot and dangerous road over the desert from Mosul to Bagdad, the first stage on their way home to Persia. They were warned by their more educated leaders that they would fall by the way at the hands of Arabs and Kurds and at the end of their long and toilsome journey they would find only a closed door they would not be allowed to enter Urumia. Their only answer, made with uncanny quietness of demeanor and a peculiar smile on their faces was, "We are going home. It is better to die on the road than to remain longer in the land of strangers."

Scarcely stopping in Bagdad they streamed through the city on their way to the Persian border. The Persian Consul in Bagdad placed no obstacles in their way.

At the border the Persian authorities at first permitted them to pass freely until some few thousand had crossed over to their Promised Land of Persia.

Suddenly orders were issued in Teheran prohibiting further entrance of the refugees and turning back as many as possible of those who had succeeded in crossing the border.

No reason was given for this unexpected order but it became evident that it was due to false statements made by interested parties who were opposed to their return. A thousand heart broken men, women and children were held up at the border unable either to go forward or to return. Several thousand camped by the road side in Bagdad hoping against hope that new orders would be issued permitting them to proceed.

It had been falsely represented at Teheran that these returning refugees were the mountaineer Assyrians of Turkish citizenship; that they were armed and were proposing to make a settlement in Urumia by force of arms.

When the government in Teheran was once persuaded that these people were Persian subjects; of the peasant class, unarmed and composed largely of women and children, the prohibitive order was rescinded and the people were allowed again to enter but only on condition that they would not proceed as far as Urumia.

The movement was resumed and a few thousand of the refugees got as far as Tabriz the point nearest Urumia where they have been befriended by the Near East Relief workers and American missionaries. Several thousand were induced to settle temporarily in villages around Hamadan and Kermanshah. Perhaps three thousand remained in the City of Bagdad where they are earning their living but still long to return to their vineyards and fields in Urumia.

Before the war several thousand of these Urumia Assyrians had migrated to America where they have prospered. During this period of refugee life they have contributed most generously to the support of their destitute friends and relatives. In the spring of 1921 after the failure of the repatriation movement they sent large remittances for the passage to America of their friends. The sum total of these remittances has amounted to nearly \$800,000.

This emigration movement continued until the passing of the 3rd immigration law in the summer of 1921.

During the two succeeding years of 1921 and 1923 the situation of these exiled people has changed but little. They still occupy the three centers:- Bagdad, where they are showing themselves to be industrious, law abiding and fairly successful in earning a living under most difficult circumstances, - Hamadan and Kermanshah - where with little or no aid from the Relief Committee they have been wringing a precarious existence out of untoward conditions -

Tabriz - close by Urumia. Here they have suffered most from hunger and general destitution.

Last fall in October and November, 1922, those in Tabriz driven to desperation by hunger and long deferred hope made overture to the Persian Government in Tabriz looking toward their return to Urumia.

At first the Government showed itself favorable to their request and those in Tabriz began their return in small bands. As word of this movement spread to Hamadan and Kermanshah the procession swelled until three or four thousand of the exiles were restored to their homes, or rather to the ruins of what was once their homes. And even in the midst of the desolation of ruined villages the home sick exiles rejoiced to see again their native land. Aided somewhat by the Near East Relief they threw themselves most industriously into the work of rehabilitating their homes and resuscitating their fields and vineyards. Their Moslem neighbors with whom they had lived on good terms for many generations welcomed them back in some cases with tears of joy for they too had suffered greatly and in this community of suffering enmity had disappeared. The Moslem landed gentry also welcomed them because of their need of labor in restoring their own farms and vineyards. Likewise the commercial classes in the city who saw in the return of the Christians the end of the long stagnation of business and the hope of the old time prosperity.

But while these several classes welcomed the return of the Christians there were others, some in high places because of selfish interests at stake and others of the rabble from love of plunder and still others from among the ecclesiastics who were moved by fanatical bigotry, who were strongly antagonistic to the restoration of these Christians to the plains of Urumia and Salmas.

So it was not altogether unexpected when early in 1923 orders were issued in Teheran closing the doors again to these unfortunate exiles. No more were allowed to enter and those there were not allowed to leave. Such is the situation as it stands today.

Nine years ago these Urumia Christians constituted the most prosperous community in Persia and they were as loyal to the government as were the Persians themselves. In all their history, they had never borne arms and had never antagonized the government. They were a peaceable, industrious people, tilling the soil, paying their taxes, harming no one. They were one of the chief sources of revenue to the state.

Then came the war. In their weakness they fell victims to it. On the one side they were attacked by Moslem forces whom they had never injured or antagonized. On the other side were Christian powers who offered protection and freedom in return for their military assistance in the great struggle. This military assistance was rendered fully and faithfully and at the cost of all they possessed in property and to half of their population in lives. In rendering this service they never took the offensive against the Persian Government. Their only fighting was against an aggressive Turkish enemy and against irregular Persians who were violating their neutrality. In all that was done they were under compulsion by mighty powers against which they were impotent to contend.

For almost nine years they have been the helpless plaything of fate. They themselves harmless and faithful to their pledges, others have deceived them and exploited them. Their men have been massacred, their women have been ravished and carried into captivity. The entire population has been driven into exile and for five years they have lived the life of the damned in refugee camps dependent upon a cold charity for a meagre subsistence, bandied about from pillar to post.

When human nature could no longer endure they fled from their friends and sought to return to their own home land on the plains of Urumia and Salmas. And these plains were truly their home land; they have occupied them from the time of Zoroaster and they are as truly native to the soil as the Persians themselves.

And now at the end of the long and terrible trail they are denied the right of asylum in their own land.

All they ask is the privilege of creating a shelter for themselves amid the ruins of their old homes; to recover their fields and vineyards from the thistles and weeds that have overgrown them; to live quiet lives of thrift and industry; to become again loyal and productive subjects of Persia, a source of revenue to the state and a bulwark against its enemies on the west.

Against so reasonable and righteous a plea what opposition could be made?

As has been stated several large Moslem groups in the Urumia district have welcomed their return. The government itself when rightly informed is favorable to their return. But there is a hostile and actively antagonistic element among the ecclesiastics who are using their influence to prevent the restoration of this fruitful district of Urumia and Salmas to the Christians.

But this element alone would not be able to prevent the return of the exiles to their homes. There is another factor which has entered into the problem in opposition to the Christians and which explains the present deadlock in the movement back to Urumia - the Turk.

To understand this, reference must be made to the Turkish claim upon Mosul and the possible conflict between the Turks and the British over this claim.

The Turks have a strong force to the north of Mosul ready to strike when the time comes. But they desire also to attack from the south using the towns of Gulemania, Kerkuk and Rawan Jug as bases. The only approach to these places lies thru the plains of Salmas and Urumia. During the last two years the Turks have been using this highway in sending small bands of troops to harass the English forces to the south of Mosul, creating disturbances and even occupying the towns mentioned and thus threatening Mosul.

It is very evident that the Turks would regard the return of the Christians in any large number to Urumia and Salmas as inimical to their plans as touching Mosul. Their line of communication to the south of Mosul, they would reason, would be endangered. The more so, it would seem to them, that three or four thousand of the dreaded mountaineer Assyrians were regularly enlisted in the British army and were guarding Mosul against the approach of the Turks from the north. What more natural, they would reason, than the cooperation between these two bodies of Christians for the closing of the Urumia highway to the Turkish forces. It may be said parenthetically that there is very little likelihood of any concerted movement between these two bodies. They are totally separate in their characteristics and in their aspirations. From their experiences during the war they have come to entertain a most hearty dislike and suspicion of each other.

The Turks have an influential legation in Teheran. It is said that the Turkish legation is the source of the strong opposition to the return of the Christian refugees to Urumia and Salmas. This is very probable.

On the other hand it should be recognized by the Persian Government that the whole of the northwest province of Persia is in danger of being lost to them.

First through the Turks. Just before the war the Turks laid claim to a large portion of this province including Urumia and Salmas and had practically occupied this part of the district in pursuit of their claim.

It is to be expected that this claim will be renewed as soon as conditions justify it. As has been seen these plains are essential to them as a military highway from Van to the southern part of the Mosul Vilayet and to Bagdad.

Second through the Kurds. The Kurds are seeking to establish a separate state for themselves. In this endeavor they are seeking to unite the Shiah Kurds of Persia and as is well known Urumia and Salmas are included in their plans.

Thus through either one or both of these political movements the whole of the northwest of Persia, the most fruitful province in all Persia and one of her chief revenue producers, is in danger of being lost to the Persian Government.

The Teheran Government should be made to realize that the presence of the Christians in force in Urumia and Salmas far from being a menace to them is rather a powerful asset to their political integrity and prosperity.

They have been loyal in the past. More than ever they will be loyal to Persia in the future.

The broken promises of the European powers, all they have lost and suffered through these powers have forever disillusioned them.

They cherish no false hopes of national independence. Their interests are tied up with the interests of Persia. They are a kindred people with the Persians. The Persians in their new aspirations for an honorable place among the nations of the earth will find in these subject Christian Assyrians kindred spirits who will be loyal to them, a source of material prosperity and a defense against their enemies.

To assure this the Persians would only have to deal sympathetically with these people now in the day of their need and in the future exercise justice and generosity toward them in all governmental relations.

Inasmuch as America is held in such high esteem by the Persians, is so necessary to them for financial and advisory assistance, is it too much to hope that the state department, through legitimate and proper channels, should use its good offices to secure from the Persian Government an open door for the repatriation of their exiled subjects and a generous treatment in their efforts for rehabilitation? In doing thus, the Persians would approve themselves before the world as a nation of high standards and far-seeing statesmanship.

II. The Mountain Assyrians.

These people, as has been said, have their homes in the mountains of Kurdistan on the Turkish side of the border to the northeast of Mosul. Hence when the camp at Moudan was broken up there were only a few days caravan journey from their native hills. These hills, however, were in the hands of the Turks and Kurds as the armistice had halted the British forces just to the south of them. This prevented the British from taking open steps toward the repatriation of the mountaineers.

After the dispersion of the camp the authorities gave to the refugees a dismissal allowance in cash, seed and cattle and located them temporarily in empty villages along the northern boundary of their mandate line, known as the Zacho-Duhuk-Akra line. This boundary line is about fifty miles north of Mosul and extends from Zacho, near Jezireh Ibn Omar on the Tigris, eastward through Duhuk through Akra on the Zab River. Chargeable perhaps to the contractors much of the seed proved bad; many of the cattle were unfit for plowing; in some cases, not all, the people ate their seed and cattle. The villages given the refugees proved to be hot beds of malaria and in a few months ninety-nine percent of them, according to the official reports of the British physicians, were prostrated by an epidemic of malignant malaria; many died and those survived were for months incapacitated for work. The Near East Relief again through its agents rendered valuable assistance in cooperation with the British in combating the epidemic and in caring for the destitute.

Little by little those whose villages lay nearest to the British lines, impelled by destitution and home sickness, ventured across into No Man's Land and reoccupied their former homes. A few thousand up to the present have thus repatriated themselves and become independent of aid. That whole area, however, is strongly Kurdish and two days march is as far as it is safe for the refugees to venture beyond the British lines. Thus the greater part of the mountaineers are still living as refugees on the malarious plains of Mosul and almost in sight of their own lofty mountain peaks.

The area to the north and east of Mosul is Kurdish country and contains several strong tribes who had been only partially subdued by the Turks. These tribes resented the approach of the British and from the armistice up to the present time have made guerrilla warfare against them. The Assyrians, being renowned as fighters and adapted to just such conditions, as soon as they arrived in the refugee camp at Bakuba in 1918 and 1919 were pressed into police service by the British along the northern border. In this capacity under British officers they quelled several uprisings among these Kurds, repeatedly defeating them in battle. In 1921 on the break up of the Moudan camp three to four thousand of the Assyrians were regularly enlisted in the British army as native levies. In this service they have proved their superiority over both Arabs and Kurds and have won high praise from their English officers. But the very fact that the Assyrians had aided the British in suppressing these Kurds has thoroughly antagonized all the Moslems of that area, Arabs, Kurds and especially the Turks. This bitter hatred on the part of the Moslems of that region against the mountain people is the very serious factor in the problem of safeguarding the whole Christian community.

Associated with this deep rooted enmity of the Moslems to the mountaineers is the ominous fact that the British are about to withdraw their forces from Mosul. Immediately the question arises; in the face of such enmity what will be the fate of the whole Christian community after the withdrawal of the English?

At this point it is necessary to call attention to the two classes of Christians in the Mosul area.

First, the refugee class - namely, the mountaineers who have been under consideration.

Second, the resident Christians, those living in the City of Mosul and in large villages on the plain just outside of the city. These number in the neighborhood of fifty thousand. These Mosul Christians remained in their homes during the war and were practically unmolested, this being due to local conditions. There has never been any complication between these resident Christians and the Turkish Government. Both these classes of Christians are to be taken into consideration in dealing with the minority problem of the Mosul area.

So long as the British are in Mosul exercising their mandatory duties, even in the mildest form, these Christian communities will dwell in safety, so far as they are living within the British lines. If the British withdraw and Mosul again falls into the hands of the Turks these Christian communities will be placed in imminent peril.

As regards the resident Christians it is a question whether or not they would be molested. The local Moslem sentiment of the City of Mosul would be favorable toward them. What the attitude of the Turks would be toward them is uncertain. The inclination of the Turkish Government would naturally be to treat them as they are now treating the Christians in Mardin, just to the north of Mosul, and Asia Minor as a whole which would be harsh enough; possibly so harshly as to place the Mosul community on the list of evicted Christians for whom homes would have to be provided outside of the Turkish dominions.

The case of the refugee Christians - that is the mountain Assyrians - is entirely different. Beyond all doubt for them the coming of the Turk to Mosul would involve the usual massacre followed by deportation. This for the reasons already stated; their effective service in behalf of the Allies against the Turks during the war; and since the war their effective police service for the British in which they so often punished the Kurds and Arabs; and third the fear the Turks have of these warlike mountaineers. It is not possible that the Turks would consent to leave so strong a body of Christians in that neighborhood. These causes have created an intensely hostile spirit on the part of all the Moslems in that region against these Assyrian Highlanders, a hostility however mixed with fear. It is a foregone conclusion that the most extreme measures will be taken against this group both for the sake of revenge and in order to remove what the Turks would consider a dangerous element.

It is generally accepted that the British forces are to be withdrawn from Mosul. How soon is uncertain. Recent letters from Mosul indicate that the Assyrians are anticipating the withdrawal of the British forces within two or three years and they are quite concerned as to their fate. Many of them have given up hope of ever being able to return to their homes in the hills and are desiring to emigrate to some other part of the world. The smaller number, the more warlike including those now under arms in the British service, assert their ability to protect themselves in their valleys by force of arms only asking that they first be established there and that their boundaries be fixed by an adequately guaranteed treaty.

This brings the narrative relating to the mountaineer Christians up to date.

Summary

1. The mountain Assyrians have a right to their home lands based on aboriginal occupation; there are no national boundaries, property rights being individualistic. The land is held by individuals in fee simple.

2. At the beginning of the war they officially placed themselves on the side of the Allies. In this they were governed in part by moral standards; in part by personal considerations hoping through alliance to achieve deliverance from oppressive Turkish domination and to become a self-governing community.

3. Both Russians and English encouraged them to take this step and made promises to them of political independence in return for their military service.

4. The Assyrians fulfilled their military obligations with faithfulness and efficiency.

5. Both Russians and English, in varying degrees, made large use of the military power of these people but repeatedly failed in their obligations to them.

6. As a result of the war and the failure of these two powers to fulfill their obligations to them the Assyrians suffered the loss of all they possessed - lands, homes, property and their ancestral places of worship so especially dear to them - and the lives of half their population. Driven out of their territory in 1915 they have lived as refugees for eight years, moved about from pillar to post, poorly housed, underfed, and largely deprived of freedom of movement. During this time they have been frequently attacked by Turks and irregular Kurds and Persians and several times they have seen the more defenseless portion of their people massacred and plundered. Their patriarch was most treacherously assassinated by a Ismael Agha of Salmas, who was instigated thereto, it is asserted, by Persian notables of that district.

During these eight years of exile and of sufferings and what they have considered wrong treatment, they faithfully adhered to the allied cause and have given continuous and effective military service first for the allied cause and later for the British in particular.

7. Today, four years after the armistice, they are, with small exception, still refugees from their homes, living in want and discomfort, slowly perishing from malaria and other diseases.

8. The impending withdrawal of the British forces from Mosul threatens them with final extinction by massacre and deportation.

Inquiries.

1. What is the political status of this small minority?

2. Is it possible, through any of the great powers, including America, to secure these people such political rights as will enable them to have restored to them their country and to maintain them therein in safety?

3. If it is not practicable to restore these people to their own homes is there any possible action that can be taken by the governments concerned looking toward their settlement elsewhere?

4. If they cannot be restored to their own country and no provision can be made for their settlement as a colony elsewhere is there any other alternative than to leave them to remain where they are to suffer massacre and deportation?

5. In all human probability events will move forward to a compulsory immigration of the Assyrians. Who will determine whither?

6. Will it be wiser to allow events to take their course until these people are suddenly evicted by the Turks and then meet the question of where they are to be located and how they are to be transported? Or will it be possible to take up the question of their future at this present time with the English and the Turkish Governments in endeavor to find a solution that will enable them to remain in their own country but with such safeguards thrown about them that they shall have no further fear of molestation or unjust treatment?

(signed) E. W. McDowell

(Copy to Dr. Speer)

SEP 22 1932

The Indigenous Church of Urumia, Persia.

Ans.

The "Syrian Evangelical Church" in the beginning of its history drew most of its members from the Old Nestorian Church.

It was at the Council of Ephesus in 431 A. D., that Nestorius of Antioch, Bishop of Constantinople, was condemned for his alleged heretical opinions concerning the person of Christ.

The "Church of the East" with headquarters at Seleucia - Ctesiphon took up his cause and was later cut off from Communion with the "Western Church". The Nestorian Church was for a time free from persecution, flourished and spread rapidly. In the latter part of the fifth century, Nestorianism was accepted as the religion of the Christian Church in Persia. It became the largest Church then existing and was famed for its missionary zeal and for its schools, from which it sent out missionaries into many lands. Cosmas, a Christian traveller a hundred years before Mohammed, says that the Nestorian Church was sending missionaries to preach the Gospel to, "Bactrians, Huns, Persians, Indians, Armenians, Medes, and Elamites, and in the whole country of Persia the churches and bishops are without number."

Numerous churches were scattered throughout Persia from the Gulf of Persia to the Caspian Sea. There were persecutions, but the Church thrived. In the middle of the sixth century the Persian Government recognized Christianity - to be tolerated but not to proselyte.

At the close of the fourteenth century came Tamerlane, the scourge of destruction, and he about succeeded in his determination to exterminate the churches of Persia. Many Christians fled for refuge to the mountains of Kurdistan. Long afterwards some of these ventured down into the plains of Urumia and Salmas, where they lived for centuries as a despised and persecuted sect under Mohammedan rule.

When the Nestorian Church was divided, the larger part of those living in Kurdistan and north-west Persia accepted Mar Shimmon as their Patriarch with the Patriarchate at Kochannis, a village in Kurdistan.

Nearly a hundred years ago when Protestant Missions were begun in the Urumia region, there were only about one hundred and fifty thousand Nestorians, or Syrians, left. Of these about eighty thousand were living among a million Kurds in Kurdistan, thirty thousand were living around Urumia Lake, and forty thousand who had become Roman Catholics were living along the Tigris with the Patriarchate near Mosul. These were of the "Uniat Chaldean Church".

The people are called Syrians and are supposed to be descendants of the ancient Semitic peoples of Assyria and Chaldea. Their language is the Syriac, their ancient language is the Syriac of the "Pshitta Bible" and closely allied to the Aramaic language spoken by the Jews of Palestine in the time of Our Lord.

A hundred years ago, their once sturdy and living Faith, had lost its power and had degenerated into mere formalism. The Church was dead and its priesthood ignorant and degraded. The purpose of the Mission in the first years was to revive and spiritualize the Old Church without interfering with its organization. Twenty years of effort proved this impossible. There was no life to revive, yet they had kept the form of the Faith in its original purity, to a larger degree than any other Oriental Church, clinging reverently to their Bible as the Word of God.

As converts were won to a spiritual faith, they were persecuted, denied the sacraments, and often driven out of the Old Church. The organization of the Evangelical Church came about gradually, for neither the missionaries nor the native leaders wished a separation. Rev. Wm. A. Shedd wrote, "The separation came about at length for the following reasons; (1) The Patriarch at first friendly, did all in his power to destroy the evangelical work and to compel the spiritually minded to quit his fold. (2) The converts could not long accept the unscriptural practices which prevailed and for which there were no available methods of discipline or reform. (3) The converts asked for better care and instruction and means of grace than were found in the dead language and rituals of the Old Church. The separation was not a violent disruption. The converts were at first invited to unite with the missionaries in the Lord's Supper. As the village converts increased in strength, pastors were placed over them. In time these village pastors and other laborers in reform - bishops, presbyters, and deacons - met in conference with the missionaries and adopted a simple confession of faith with a form of government and rules of discipline."

The first congregations were formed in 1855 with 158 members. The first conference, or knusha, was held in 1862. The rules then adopted, were enlarged in 1878 and again in 1887.

In 1909, after more than half a century of separation, the question of the union of the two churches was raised and caused much discussion. The Evangelical Church members were largely from the Urumia Plain, though there were a number of Evangelical Churches organized among the Syrians of Kurdistan. The members of the Nestorian Church were chiefly in the mountains. The hope from such a union was the Old Church might be spiritualized and revived by the spread of evangelical principles and that the Evangelical Church might find a larger field and greater opportunity for preaching evangelical truth in the larger organization. The decision of the question of unity rested with the two bodies concerned and the matter ended with the agreement that the Evangelicals should be allowed to preach in Nestorian churches with the understanding that they would not attempt to form new churches among the Nestorians of Kurdistan.

At the time of its organization, many Nestorians entered the Reformed Church. Among them was the brother of the former Patriarch, seventy priests, or kashas, three bishops, and a large number of deacons.

almost
Persecution was severe from the beginning. The Old Church was intolerant, and its priests and bishops were frequently influential enough to get co-operation from the Governor. In 1842 an order was issued that no Christian should be permitted to change from one sect to another. This order was rescinded in 1851, but at the same time an effort was made to nullify evangelical influence. The Urumia Governor who was assisting in this persecution, was killed by a Kurd, and the Governor-general of Tabriz who was supporting him, was driven out.

Kurd, and the Governor-General at Tabriz, ~~xxxxxx~~ who was supporting him, was driven out, and the opposition stopped for a time.

The Evangelical Church was organized with four knushas, or presbyteries, three of these were in Urumia, one on each river, and the fourth was in Turkey among the converts there. Its officers were pastors, elders and deacons.

Rev. John H. Shedd was chiefly instrumental in perfecting the organization of the Church. The executive body was the "Evangelistic Board" of nine members chosen by the General Knusha. There was a "Board of Education", three chosen from each ~~xxxxxx~~ section, or river, for oversight of the village Church schools, at times as many as one hundred of them, including those in Kurdistan. The "Legal Board" had oversight of such matters as are usually managed by bishops in Oriental churches. It also settled legal cases between Christians and so prevented them getting into the Persian Courts, causing endless trouble, and bringing disgrace upon the Church. The Station was represented on these Board by one or two members without a vote, and reserved the right of veto in certain cases.

Referring to the Legal Board, ~~xxxxxx~~ in 1898, at the request of Dr. J.P. Cochran, ~~St.~~, an order was issued by the provincial authorities, including the representative of the Foreign Office, and the Crown Prince, who represented the Shah in Azerbaijan, giving full legal rights to it to adjudicate matters in the Protestant Church. Thus the "Legal Board" was formally recognized by the Persian Government. Criminal cases were settled in the civil courts, but all sorts of cases between Christians were settled in this Church Court and the decision of the "Legal Board" was accepted as final by Persian authorities.

"The fundamental reason for this remarkable state of things," wrote Wm. A. Shedd, "is that Eastern jurisprudence in general and Moslem jurisprudence in particular, regard Law as a religious institution, and so accept as binding within the bounds of each religious community, the peculiar laws of that community. Divorce and inheritance are generally regarded as subjects amenable to religious law. So we had here to constitute a Church Court. The appeal in any case where coercion must be used, is necessarily to the Civil Court."

Later a code of rules regulating marriage and divorce based on the Nestorian Sunhadis, or book of Church Government, was adopted by the Evangelical Church.

Said Wm. A. Shedd, "The history of this reformation is one of the most intensely interesting anywhere on record in missionary annals. It has been the spread of Pentecostal power penetrating hundreds of villages. Out of it might be written many chapters of thrilling incidents, illustrating the work of the Holy Spirit, convincing of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and chapters of remarkable providence in ordinary labors in revivals; also during the prevalence of pestilence and famine and war!"

Dr. Perkins wrote a long time ago, "Heaven will not know any higher joy than the joy of redeemed Nestorians in the presence of their Saviour."

Revivals have been of frequent occurrence through the

Revivals have been of frequent occurrence through the history of the Church. Let one of the students of the early years speak, "The blessed Stoddard called me to him at the close of that Sabbath day. We boys in his school had been unusually reckless in our conduct that day. I was a candidate for bishop's orders and a leader in hilarity. Calling me to him he said, 'with a grieved look and sadness in his voice yet in touching kindness, ' Bishop, how long will you thus harden yourself against God?' As he went on my heart was moved as never before. He prayed with me, and I went out in a state of mind wholly new to me. Others were talked with that same evening. We had no knowledge at that time of what conversion was or of the power of the Holy Spirit. That night we gave ourselves to prayer and could not sleep. A conviction of sin we had never before felt filled our souls and drove away sleep.

Then it was that we learned of the Holy Spirit's effectual working."

In 1871 there was a revival in the Degala Church with more than twenty conversions. In Hassan, a mountain district, the young bishop, Mar Yosip, who was pastor there reported, "The first two days of the Week of Prayer we spent in fasting and special prayer. I believe that God for the sake of His dear Son, heard our voice, for we are witnessing an awakening beyond our faith and expectation, hard hearts melted, the tears of sinners and the joy of converts, Not only in the place of meeting. but through the village, is heard the voice of prayer and weeping in many houses until the morning. Another surprising thing is the rising of persons in the congregation confessing their sins, revealing secret faults, acknowledging theft and while asking pardon, offering restitution. One young man gave his dagger to the Gospel treasury, being unable to discover the owner of an article he had stolen long ago.

About twenty persons are beginning a new life. About one hundred and fifty persons assemble every night and the place cannot hold them. Some sit in the doorway and some outside in the cold."

In 1876 at a Communion service at the College one boy after another spoke witnessing to the work of the Spirit." They continued the meeting for six hours, forgetting that they had not eaten bread." A Week of Prayer followed and two hundred and forty-one were added to the Church.

Ten years later seventeen congregations were stirred with five hundred inquirers, the work being conducted almost entirely by native pastors, The Spirit of the Lord was present in power. The churches could not hold the crowds. Backsliders returned, quarrels were made up, confessions were publicly made, drunkards repented. The children were aroused and in one place a band of them went from house to house, singing hymns reading Scripture and praying. The additions to the Churches were two hundred and eighty-six that year.

At another time, the "Persia Inner Mission" was formed by Syrians with the purpose of making themselves responsible for the work of evangelization. In 1890 a group of young men formed the "Oshanna Band" and went out as evangelists at their own expense. Later they chose one of their own number as evangelist and paid his salary. Following the revival of 1890, sixty were added to the Church. The next year twenty congregations were stirred into new life. There were times through the years when the Spirit came in power upon the schools and scores of the young consecrated their lives to Christ.

About twenty-five years ago M. Franssen, a Swedish evangelist, visited Urumia. He preached in the schools in the city and in a number of the churches. Where ever he went, the Fire fell and the Church was on her knees.

The Evangelical Church has been a burning light in all this region and has sent her men into distant places. Some were early sent to Bohtan, two hundred miles away on the Tigris, and others to several mountain districts. These lighted the torch which set whole villages aflame, and later these villages became the centers of evangelical church life. The foundations of the work in Salmas, Tabriz, Maragha, and Hamadan were laid by Urumia preachers.

Benjamin Badal was for many years the brave, zealous, and much enduring colporteur of the B. & F. B. S. in Southern Persia often hazarding his life for the sake of his Master.

A more noted Urumia evangelist was Pastor Jacob Dillikoff who spent nearly forty years travelling about Russia as the apostle of evangelical truth, in connection with the great revival of the Synodist Movement. He laid down his life in Siberia whither he had gone to preach the Gospel under hardships which he was unable to bear.

In more recent years, there was Rabi Yakob of Geogtapa who spent many years as a Moslem evangelist. Rev. F. N. Jessup wrote of him. "Rabi Yakob was ready to learn from any one. Noticing what a wide hearing the wandering dervishes gain as they narrate in a singsong tone long poems about the imams and Persian heroes, he composed many similar poems telling the life of Christ and the apostles and explaining the way of salvation. He found these were listened to with great interest by the common people, and has had dervishes ask to learn them from him. Alas, I fear they have not been preserved. Asked once what he did when he found the crowd growing angry and threatening under the truth, he replied that he usually told them some Old Testament story. David and Goliath or Daniel in the lion's den would interest and ~~disarm the crowd~~ quiet the crowd and disarm anger.----- He died in harness. A few hours before his death, when he could no longer speak much, he pointed upwards, smiling, saying, 'Heaven, Heaven. I am ready. I am ready!'"

Rabi Yosip Sayad, as evangelist for Moslems laid down his life two years ago while on a hard winter tour, far from home and without medical aid until too late. For several years he had given himself without stint to this most difficult of missionary service, growing in consecration and power, counting all things but loss for the sake of Him Whom he served.

It has been said that probably no Church in the Orient, in proportion to its numbers, has sent out so many preachers, teachers, colporteurs and other Christian workers. During these later years, nearly of our stations in Persia have had employed in their work men and women who are the product of this Church.

In 1870 the name of the Mission was changed from "Mission to the Nestorians" to "Mission to Persia" In 1871 the A. B. C. F. M. turned over the Mission work to the Presbyterian Board and at that time there were forty-eight out stations, nine ordained men, fifty-two preachers, forty-six teachers, 1012 pupils, and nine organized churches with over seven hundred communicants.

In 1885 when the Mission held its Jubilee, there were twenty-five organized churches, forty-eight other congregations, thirty-six ordained ministers, thirty licentiates, a membership of twenty-three hundred with six thousand adherents and four self-supporting churches. The yearly contributions were two thousand dollars for

dollars for churches and schools and three hundred dollars for Missions

No church was organized until able to pay one-fourth of its expenses. Mr. James Basset said that when he visited Urumia in 1871, the subject most urged upon the Evangelical Church was that of self-support.

The part of the Jubilee celebration in Syriac was held at in the College Compound in July 1885 with fifteen hundred present. One of the most impressive features was the presence of eight hundred Syrian women, most of them with Testaments and Hymn-books.

A Mohammedan official present asked "What are those women doing here with books in their hands?" When all the women who could read were asked to rise, six hundred responded. Fifty years before only one woman in the nation could read, the sister of the Patriarch.

The influence of the Evangelical Church upon the women cannot be measured. Hundreds, yes, thousands of Godly women have taken their places of responsibility in the Church, many of them as deaconesses, teachers and evangelists. They have built up thousands of Christian homes, sending out immeasurable influences for righteousness in this Moslem land. They have trained their children to carry on in the Christian way of living. There have been and are to-day women much stronger and more dependable in the leadership of the Church than any of the men of their villages.

At the time of the Jubilee of the Mission, the largest and strongest church was in Geogtapa, a village of fifteen hundred inhabitants one-half of whom were adherents of the Protestant Church, which had a membership of over three hundred. The church was self-supporting and made contributions to Missions. It was well organized with pastor, elders, deacons, deaconesses, and had a Sabbath-School, Bible classes and Missionary Society.

The deaconesses divided the women so that each had her own group to help, instruct, and guide in their efforts in their efforts to extend the Kingdom. Last but not least, they settled all quarrels among the women. Some of the deaconesses went to other villages on Sunday to help and teach the women. "This was a church holding the pure Gospel, self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating." The fulfillment of the aim and purpose of Missions.

This church during the war years was twice destroyed, but to-day they are worshiping in a new building with faces hopefully turned toward the future.

In 1897 came the Russian Mission to Urumia with all the power of a political organization, under the patronage of the Tsar.

As the priests went from village to village, they took over the Nestorian church buildings without asking permission and without regard to legal rights and reconsecrated them as Orthodox churches.

Those who gave their names to be written were received into the Orthodox Church. They made confession to the priests, and later all the "converts" were given the Communion. In this way the Russian Church took over nearly the whole of the Nestorian Church, a great many Armenians and Roman Catholics, and some of the weaker members of the Protestant Church. Most of the members of the Evangelical Church were loyal and stood firm in the midst of great temptation.

Those who had become Orthodox were not true converts, but they had so long suffered oppression from a Mohammedan Government and were so terrified by the recent massacres of Christians in Turkey, that they hoped to find refuge in the Russian Church and protection from their oppressors through the power of the Russian Government, which was then strong in Persia.

The Church celebrated its Jubilee in 1912 with great gratitude to God for its strong organization, with schools in ~~practically~~ nearly every villages where there were churches, for its enlightened membership of over three thousand, with the Word of God in practically every every home engraved upon their minds and hearts, for its material prosperity, for lessened oppressions, for a deepened sense of missionary responsibility as voiced by Dr. Wm.A. Shedd, " The justification for the existence of the Church will lie not so much in its doctrine as in its missionary activity. Our justification will be very largely in the work done in making the Gospel known to Moslems and in extending evangelical truth among the various peoples, Christian and non-Christian, with whom its members come in contact."

During the last decade before the World War, the question of the Church's independence was given a great deal of consideration, the Station urging and the Church fearing acceptance of its responsibility.

The Evangelistic Board, as the executive body of the Church, had for a long time been responsible for ~~the~~ one-third of the financial support of the Church as a whole, and a few individual churches were entirely self-supporting.

This Board finally accepted its entire responsibility for the Church, with subsidies from the Station and agreed with the Mission upon certain principles for working out their problems, in substance as follows :

" (1) The principle that the Mission should not exercise control over the Native Church, this being interpreted so that even the grant of money does not carry with it the right of control over the expenditure of the money.

(2) The Mission is not under compulsion to make grants in aid to the Church, and in making such grants, the understanding if not the formal condition, should be that they are not for the purpose of enabling the Christian communities to have ' regular services ', but to aid them as Evangelistic agencies.

(3) The principle of co-operation as separate bodies in the relation of the Mission and the Church. They are bound together by bonds of love and service.

(4) The Mission may properly exercise independent control of the work carried on by it which is in character auxiliary to rather than essentially a part of the Church work, such as educational, literary and medical work. This line cannot be arbitrarily drawn and there will be need of patience, forbearance, and careful thought.

(5) As missionaries we have both the right and the privilege to be evangelists, but in the exercise of this work among Moslems and non-Moslems, care must be taken to stimulate and not discourage the missionary spirit of the Church."

Then came the World War bringing such devastation to this Church that scarcely a Christian was left in Urumia or in the mountain filed to testify to his faith, though hundreds of men and women did testify by untold suffering and by death, of their living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Probably as many as four-fifths of their ordained men and other Christian workers and two-thirds of the membership perished or were scattered to the four winds.

During the last decade, that is from the fall of 1922, the scattered remnant have been creeping back to their desolated homes and churches. The Church is being reorganized. There are about a thousand members, with only three ordained men. One of these was ordained in the Old Church. There are ten organized churches and between forty and fifty other groups scattered all over the plain of Urumia.

This year a new plan is being put into effect, with the purpose of putting all the responsibility for the churches upon the General Knusha. Each church or group must present its budget every year to the Knusha. After approval by this body, the Station votes such subsidies as are approved by them. Responsibility for employment of pastors and evangelists and approval of students for theological training is on the Knusha. There are many problems yet to solve, but they are standing up bravely to their duty.

Several churches have been rebuilt, each congregation subscribing according to its ability up to more than one-half the cost. Others are waiting until the groups are ready to do their share.

There are two theological classes with nine students. Four will graduate in 1933 and settle in pastorates. All are now giving week-ends and vacations to preaching in villages.

The largest and most prosperous church is in the city of Urumia. They contributed about half the cost of their church and are carrying a goodly share of pastor's salary, ~~and~~ as well as, ~~all other~~ church expenses.

A tremendous blow to the Church was the closing by the Govt. of the village church schools. This means that the large majority, now many hundreds of the children of the Church, have no opportunity for even the most elementary education. If this continues, the Bible will become a closed book to the village churches, except for the few who may be able to come to the city schools.

What has been, by the grace of God, may be again. We shall see a strong spiritual Church scattered through this part of Persia, a light to lighten the Mohammedan world round about.

With all their weaknesses, which are inevitable in a people who for centuries have been persecuted and oppressed, living in fear, the Syrians are responsive to religious appeal and are peculiarly fitted to be evangelists and preachers. May many individuals again ~~be~~ be chosen by God from among them for the task of evangelizing Persia.

Mary Lewis Shedd

(Mrs. Tom. A.)

Urumia Persia, August, 1932.

September 23, 1932

My dear Mrs. Walton,

I am afraid they cut us off when you were speaking to me over the telephone a few days ago. I tried to get you again but without success. Since talking to you a letter has been received from Mrs. Shedd in which she writes as follows:

"I am enclosing a copy of an article which I was assigned to write by the Station. Bishop Linton is to write the chapter on "The Indigenous Church" for the Centennial Book and each station has one of its members write on the subject for that station, so as to furnish source material for Bishop Linton. The same is being done for the writer of every chapter.

"I am to write the first chapter of that book, a general sketch of Missions for a hundred years. It was for that chapter that I want the material from the Board files. That is - my chapter is to cover all Permia.

"Mrs. Walton wrote me that she had engaged someone to do the work and that the material would be sent in June. It has not yet arrived, and I am writing Mrs. Walton to look it up."

Sincerely yours,

Secretary to Mr. Spear.

C.

Dr. Robert E. Speer
For your information.
A. L. Warnshuis

A. L. Warnshuis

October 30, 1933.

Dr. W. I. Chamberlain,
25 East 22nd Street,
New York, N.Y.

My dear Dr. Chamberlain:

I return herewith the file of correspondence and other papers referring to the Assyrian problem.

I had over an hour's conversation with Mr. Murray and Mr. Alling on this subject last Friday. We compared notes regarding the information in our possession and I was impressed with the fact that full information is not only in the files in the State Department but is in Mr. Murray's mind. He seems to be intimately acquainted with all of the details of these recent events and has an unusual appreciation of their significance. He was reserved in expressing his judgment but said quite freely that the letter of Mr. Berdeau~~u~~ seemed to be an excellent summary of the whole situation and he was in agreement with the judgments expressed in Mr. Berdeau~~u~~'s closing paragraph. It is evident that the Department is keeping itself well informed with reference to this situation but there was no discussion of any policy and much less of any action that our Government might take with reference to these events.

I obtained the additional information, which is not in your papers, that Mr. Cumberland with the assistance of Mr. Knabenshue, the American Minister, had an interview with the Minister of the Interior with the result that Mr. Cumberland was entirely exonerated of the charges that had been made regarding alleged "political activity." Mr. Murray understood that Mr. Panfil was leaving Iraq or had already gone because of lack of financial support for that mission.

I shall be glad to meet with you and Paton on Saturday when we can talk further regarding this situation and especially regarding further action by Mr. Paton in England.

Yours truly,

A. L. Warnshuis

C O P Y

I N T E R N A T I O N A L M I S S I O N A R Y C O U N C I L

4 1 9 F O U R T H A V E N U E
N E W Y O R K

October 30, 1933.

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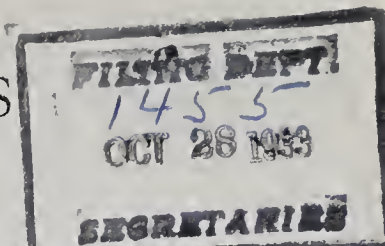
Yours truly,

(signed) A. L. Warnshuis

ALW:H

Jonathan S Colia
COUNCIL OF ASSYRIAN SOCIETIES

1922 Cleveland Avenue
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



MARSHALL YACOE, PRESIDENT
JOEL SARGIS, VICE-PRESIDENT

JONATHAN S. COLIA, SECRETARY
S. G. DAVAJAN, ASST. SECRETARY
BABA SARGIS, TREASURER

October 24, 1933

Dr. Robert E. Speer
156 Fifth Avenue
New York City

Dear Dr. Speer:

Our Council wishes to thank you most sincerely for your very kind letter of October 7 and your helpful suggestions.

Regarding the Assyrians who have gone into Syria we have no definite information as to how many of them are in that country now. But we do know they are located in or near a place called Deir-ez-Zor. As to the attitude of the French authorities, from all that we know they are symapthetic.

We have received several communications from our Patriarch, His Beatitude Mar Shimun, who, as you no doubt know, was exiled by the Iraq Government to Cyprus and is at present in Geneva, together with a prominent Swiss attorney, pleading the cause of our unfortunate people before the League of Nations. We had a letter from him yesterday informing us that he is doing all in his power to get some favorable action.

Several days ago we received a few copies of a personal appeal from His Beatitude Mar Shimun, addressed to all the Christian Churches. All of these copies bear his signature and seal, and the truthfulness of the contents of this appeal is unquestionable. We are enclosing a copy for your and the Board of Foreign Missions' information.

We are profoundly grateful for all you and the Board of Foreign Missions have done for our people in the past and we earnestly ask you to give us your support and aid in this the darkest hour in the history of our people.

As yet we have not communicated with Dr. W.J. Chamberlain. In all probability we will.

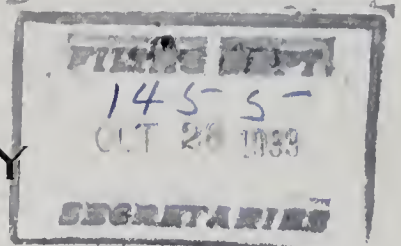
Most sincerely yours,

COUNCIL OF ASSYRIAN SOCIETIES

Jonathan S Colia Secretary

L-103
John B. Keena

ÆTNA LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT.



AGENCY AT 1010 Congress
Bldg., Miami, Florida
Oct. 25, 1933

Dr. Robert E. Speer
New York City.

My dear Dr. Speer:

I am writing you from the office of a friend in Miami, Florida. My older son (there are two boys) is unable to live in Northern climates, and for the last two years I have established the family in this state. The boy has done so well that I may decide to live here permanently. This will explain my presence in this city.

The long expected letter from my father arrived yesterday. He

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has written some 14 pages in Syriac, ^{AGENCY AT} which would probably mean 25 pages if translated into English.

My father asked me to give you and Dr. McDowell a summary of his statement. I hasten to do this because I know you are anxious to get the facts.

As I wrote you from Constantinople recently I have been unwilling to rush ⁱⁿ and accuse the Iraq government of willful murder of innocent men and women. I know our mountain people too well to accept such a naive theory. And my suspicions have been confirmed by my father's statement. I shall give you the story briefly.

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In the last 25 years, our ^{AGENCY AT} Nestonian people have had the worst sort of leadership from Mar Shimmun, who is their traditional spiritual as well as Temporal leader. You know Surma, the sister of the late Mar Shimmun, and the Aunt, I think of the present lad, who calls himself the leader of our people. The leadership of the house of Mar Shimmun has brought more tragedies upon our Nestonian people than any other single cause. That leadership has been marked by stupidity and ignorance, by selfishness and greed, and by utter lack of understanding of the fundamental issues facing the neighboring governments

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AGENCY AT

of Persia, Turkey, and Iraq. One would think that the experience of the last 16 tragic years had taught Surma and ^{her} cohorts something; but no! She remains the same type of a leader that she was in 1916 and 1917 and 1918 when the Kurdistan Mountains were for all practical purposes destroyed forever, as far as nationhood is concerned.

The cause of the present disaster started some 18 months ago, when Mr. Shimmun called a "Convention" at Amidia, which is at the foothills of the Kurdistan Mountains. There he laid down the following policy:

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1. That his "nation" should strive for "independence"
2. That all ^{Nestorian} officers and enlisted men in the British and drag-army should henceforth be subject to his command in case he called them to arms for the purpose of revolution or in case he decided to fight for the "freedom" of his people. My father warned him against such tactics and begged him to give up such foolish ideas in regard to the "independence" or freedom of our people. How can a few thousand of poor and oppressed people build

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a great and Independent ^{AGENCY AT} "Notion" ?
 The idea is worthy only of the mind
 of a child. But our Shimmun
 persisted, and the climax was
 reached this summer when some
 1500 people left Iraq to go to the
 borders of Syria to establish for
 themselves a home. The Iraqi
 troops attacked them and treated
 them as traitors and insurrectos,
 and the ever willing Kurds joined
 in, and some 800 to 900 were killed,
 my father says that he will know
 soon just how many were slaughtered.
 The sad part of this whole tragic affair
 is that ^{many} innocent men and women
 and children were massacred.

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There are 1500 Orphans ^{AGENCY AT} and widows
in one camp in Mosul. My father
says that all the people that listened
to him ^(my father) and followed his advice are
safe in Iraq and are not molested.
In fact the Iraq government is
taking care of the 1500 Orphans and
widows. The provocation for this
terrible tale came from our people.
That is the point to remember. But
the result is indeed awful. My father
describes the unpeakable misery of
the widows and orphans and the destruction
wrought by Kurds and the usual
performances with which you are
familiar.

Briefly that is the story. It does
not alter the suffering of the innocents,

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and the cry of the helpless children
who are left behind.

AGENCY AT

Mr Sherman and his house
have been banished from the Country.
Good riddance! Our people must
now decide to become peaceful
and law-abiding citizens and give
up forever this childish idea of
becoming a "great" and "independent"
people. Our days are numbered, and
in the providence of God our "Restonian
Nation" as such will before long become
a mere memory.

My father has given a great many
other details, hence if you have
any questions that have not been

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HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT.

9

answered, I should be ^{AGENCY AT} happy to give
you what information I have
on the subjects in question.

- With kindest personal regards,
and best wishes,

Respectfully and Cordially Yours,

John B. Keena

N.B. Until Nov. 15th at 1010 Congress
Bldg., Miami, Florida.

J.B.K.

J. S. Badeau -
C O P Y

Dr. Speer

Baghdad - Iraq.
August 25, 1933

CONFIDENTIAL

The Revd. W. I. Chamberlain, Ph.D., Secretary,
United Mission in Mesopotamia,
25 East 22d St.,
New York City, U.S.A.

My dear Dr. Chamberlain:

Official communiques are usually very unsatisfactory sources of information, and those issued by the Iraq Government during the recent Assyrian troubles are no exception to the rule. Mr. Cumberland had written for Dr. Speer a detailed account of events, a copy of which I enclose, and I wish to add some further review and comment, particularly in view of the effect of the disturbances on our Mission's work.

The "Report of Ten Years' Progress in Iraq, 1920-1930", which volume I am sending to you by Miss Honse, contains a good brief account of the situation of the Assyrian question up to Iraq's entry into the League of Nations. When the mandate was terminated the Iraq Government undertook to settle the homeless Assyrians on unoccupied lands in northern Iraq, a plan which had already been adopted by the British Administration. A Land Commission was appointed by the Iraq Government to deal with disputes arising out of the division of government lands in tribal areas, and a special member of the commission, Major Thompson, was given the oversight of the Assyrian settlement. He arrived in Mosul in May of this year, intending to proceed with the settlement.

Mar Shimun, the Assyrian Patriarch, has consistently opposed all efforts of the Iraq Government (as distinct from the British Administration) to cooperate in settling the Assyrian claims. After Iraq entered the League he journeyed to Geneva to lay before the League of Nations in person certain petitions expressing dissatisfaction with the promised treatment of the Assyrians in Iraq. These petitions were refused, and Mar Shimun returned to Iraq, apparently committed to the policy discrediting all attempts of the Iraq Government to settle the Assyrians. This attitude naturally embarrassed the Government in its settlement efforts as the whole weight of Mar Shimun's influence was being exerted against the acceptance by the Assyrians of the Government settlement scheme.

Mar Shimun's attitude seems to have been dictated by his mistrust of the good faith of the Iraq Government and the fact that

the proposed settlement would not leave the Assyrians intact as a political unit with him as their (political) head.

Before Major Thompson's arrival in Mosul, Mar Shimun had been invited by the Government to come to Baghdad for conference with the Department of the Interior. He was asked to make a declaration of loyalty to the Government, and to desist from all attempts to act as the political head of the Assyrian nation, confining his activities to the spiritual oversight of his people. This he refused to do, and in consequence was not allowed to return to Mosul. He was in Baghdad at the Y.M.C.A. under strict surveillance during all the trouble.

During May and June Major Thompson began the groundwork of settlement by calling meetings of local Assyrian leaders in the hope of obtaining their cooperation with the Government's plans. The majority of the tribes agreed to accept the proposed settlement, but a party of malcontents under Yaqu bin Malik Ismail of Upper Tiari (who was apparently acting under orders from Mar Shimun) refused cooperation in any way. Yaqu retired to the mountains with an armed force and threatened trouble. Under a promise of safe conduct he was at last brought to Mosul where the Revd. John B. Panfil, of the American Episcopal Mission to the Assyrians gave bond that he would keep the peace. On this promise he was allowed liberty. It seemed for a time as tho the unrest might not prove serious, and the settlement plans proceed as per schedule. The discontent was principally confined to the two tribes of Upper Tiari and Tekhuma, and cannot be said to have represented the attitude of the whole Assyrian nation.

However, Mar Shimun's enforced absence from Mosul made the Assyrians restless, and altho a certain amount of work was started continued unrest prevented much progress. On the tenth of July, the Iraq Government called a meeting of Assyrian leaders in Mosul at which it was announced that the original scheme of settlement would be adhered to, and that if any group of Assyrians did not like the plan the Government would be glad to expedite their emigration. Yaqu and some of the Pro-Mar Shimun leaders at once announced that they were going to Baghdad to consult with Mar Shimun. A few days later it was reported that they had appeared in the north-eastern corner of Iraq, and had crossed into Syria near Peish-Khabur. Apparently these leaders either returned to Iraq or sent back reports that the Syrian Government was ready to welcome Assyrian emigrants and provide them with shelter, for shortly after this a body of men estimated at from 1300 to 2000 left their families in the villages and moved across the Tigris River into Syria. There seems to have been no disorder during this emigration.

Just what happened next is difficult to say. The Iraq government dispatched soldiers (report states from two battalions to eight thousand soldiers) to Peish Khabur with the orders to disarm all Assyrians who desired to return to Iraq. A large party started to come back across the border, promising to give up their arms, and somehow - either by accident, or as seems more likely, by order of the extreme malcontents - shots were fired and a general

engagement took place between the Government forces and the Assyrians. The fighting lasted two days, August the fourth and fifth, and during its course about one hundred Assyrians were killed and thirty-five Iraq soldiers.

This incident started the "rebellion", and the Government hurried extra police and troops to the area and formed a force of special police from among the Kurds. Kurdish and Arab tribesmen started to loot Assyrian villages, but with little loss of life. Around Dohuk there were some individual Assyrians murdered or spirited away in the dark, and Assyrian prisoners taken as hostages were sent to Mosul - it is said to be disposed of on the way. On the whole the Kurds did far less damage than might be expected, even the special police behaving with surprising (for a Kurd) restraint.

So far the Government seem to have handled the situation fairly well - considering the character of the Arab officials and the traditional feud between the Kurds and Assyrians. But on the eleventh of August there occurred an incident for which there can be no excuse whatsoever. One can only say that it was sheer, brutal savagery - a reversion to the worst days of the Turkish treatment of the Armenians.

Some miles from Dohuk there is (or was) an Assyrian village called Sumeil. It lies in the plain at the base of the Kurdish hill ranges, and near it are several other Assyrian villages. These villages did not belong to the disaffected group. Their men had not left to cross into Syria. Many of the villagers were Iraqi citizens, and during the troubles had remained loyal to the government. Altho the orders were to allow all loyal Assyrians to retain their arms, many of the villagers had given their's up to the police. When the Kurds and Arabs started to loot, the Government ordered the surrounding villagers to come to Sumeil where there was a police post and they could be protected. Then on either the tenth of August or the morning of the eleventh, the remaining arms were collected so that the village - even had it been rebellious - was incapable of any kind of resistance.

This defenseless village, packed with refugees, was then systematically massacred. All of the men, with the exception of two or three who had gone to Dohuk were killed. The small Arab population of the town was untouched. Estimates of the number massacred vary from a minimum of three hundred and fifty to seven hundred. It is extremely difficult to get an accurate estimate at this time, as no impartial or European observer has been allowed in Sumeil. I suppose the truth will never be fully known, for the only people on the spot - the Iraq army - "do not choose" to tell, at least the truth.

The Government communiques issued in response to certain articles appearing in English papers stated that if there had been a massacre (a fact which seemed dubious!) it was the work of the Arabs and Kurdish tribesmen who were looting. But the truth is

that all the evidence points to the Iraq Army itself, acting under definite orders. All the survivors testify that the killing was done by "men in blue shirts". It is obvious that the Arab never uses any shirt, and the Kurd does not use blue ones. The only section of the population wearing blue shirts is the Machine Gun Corps - so the massacre must have been at the hands of the forces sent there for "protection". At dusk the Arabs and Kurds did come in to loot, and they probably killed some of the wounded. But the Government claim that (if there was a massacre!) the Arabs and Kurds did the killing and the troops hurried there for the defense of the villages cannot be accepted as anything but sheer and deliberate untruthfulness.

Some other Christian villages near Mosul were threatened by looters, but they escaped with little damage - both because many of the villagers were armed and because the Iraq police gave them some measure of protection.

Since the Sumeil incident the situation has been gradually growing quieter - at least on the surface. Many of the refugee Assyrians have come to Mosul where the R.A.F. planes are evacuating all relatives of the Levy troops. The Iraq Government has appointed Major Thompson as relief administrator, but until the present it has given him no funds. A group of Assyrians of uncertain number are said to be in Syria where the Syrian Government is supposed to have welcomed them. Mar Shimun has been deported to Cyprus, and his aunt, Lady Surma, with some of the Assyrian leaders have been brought to Baghdad, where they are under surveillance at the Y.M.C.A. Things for the moment are quiet, but the Government is still in a very combustible state of mind and no one knows yet quite what the next move may be.

Both Mosul and Baghdad, where there are Assyrian settlements, were under great tension during these troubles. At least one Assyrian was killed in the bazaar at Mosul, and much irresponsible talk was current among the lower Moslem elements. Baghdad was very vocal in its patriotism, but heavy police patrols have kept order.

At the outbreak of the troubles all our missionaries in the northern area were at their usual stations, with the exception of the Glesner family, which was summering at Shaqlawah. On the eighth of August, just after the Peish Khabur incident, the United States Minister requested me to wire the Cumberlands asking them to return to Mosul and remain there. I did this, but my wire reached Mosul too late to catch Mr. Cumberland. The British Administrative Inspector had ordered the Cumberlands out of Dohuk on the sixth, and they had come at once to Mosul. On the eighth Mr. Cumberland returned to Dohuk, leaving his wife in Mosul. He was in Dohuk during the Sumeil massacre.

On the sixteenth/the Minister again requested that I confer with him, and suggested that all our missionaries be withdrawn from the Mosul district. He requested this action both as a precautionary measure of personal safety, and because the Iraq Foreign Office

had sent him a strongly worded note protesting against alleged "political activities" of Mr. Panfil and Mr. Cumberland. He feared that if a second protest was made the Government would request the people involved to leave the country, and so in the interests of our work strongly advised temporary withdrawal.

I at once sent a plain language message (code cables were suspect and might be delayed) calling a "special conference" of the Mission in Baghdad. The Willoughbys, Cumberlands, Miss Akerman and Mr. Glessner came at once to Baghdad, arriving there on Friday the eighteenth. Mr. Glessner had left his family in Shaqlawah because one of the children was unfit to travel. After conference with the Minister it was decided that the Glessners might remain in Shaqlawah, since there had been no trouble there, but they were to be ready to leave at a moment's notice.

The rest of the missionaries remained in Baghdad, where they are at the present. Mr. Willoughby wanted to return on this coming Monday to Mosul, but the Minister, after conference with the British Ambassador (who returned hurriedly from Scotland) has advised him to stay a few days longer until it is apparent what course of action the Iraq Government intends to take.

I am much concerned about the accusation brought against Mr. Cumberland. The note used strong phrases in referring to his "philanthropic and religious work which is being used as a blind for political activities". It is understandable why the Iraq Government should suspect Mr. Panfil. He has been close to Mar Shimun and has on several occasions acted as a mediator between the Government and the Assyrians (at the Government's request, however). He gave bond for Yaqu, the leader of the "rebellion". But with all that he has always opposed Mar Shimun's policies and has really been a strong force urging the Assyrians to adopt a cooperative attitude toward the Government.

But even these doubtful "political activities" cannot be attributed to Mr. Cumberland. His article about the Assyrians in the April "World Dominion" was highly acclaimed by the local press as an exoneration of Iraq's Assyrian policy, and several of the Arab Government officials have spoken to both him and me in praise of it. During these troubles (as well as long before), Mr. Cumberland used his influence to induce the Assyrians to become good Iraqies, and to trust the Government. And yet this is "political activity!"

As a matter of fact, we think that the real purpose back of the note was to clear all possible witnesses out of the troubled area. The Government does not want any contradictions or corrections of its official reports, nor any witnesses who can tell what really happened. The note from the Foreign Office came directly after the Sumeil massacre, from which I deduce that the occurrence of that incident so embarrassed the Government that they hurried all impartial onlookers out of the area.

The Minister has promised to take the matter up with the Iraq Government as soon as the present fever heat of anti-Assyrian

feeling has subsided. Mr. Cumberland has tried to have an appointment with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, but the return of the triumphant Iraq Army fresh from its slaughters has temporarily made it difficult. It will be hard to get the Government to retract its charges, and I am not sure that we ought to press for a formal retraction if doing so will only create ill will. When the troubles are over the Government will probably "forget" its charges and allow the Cumberlands to return without further protest.

Having written thus at length I shall not attempt much comment on the situation. The following statements represent my own opinion:

1. A definitely cooperative policy on the part of Mar Shimun would have resulted in the peaceful settlement of the Assyrians - though not according to their plans. This is denied by many, but I feel that the Government was sincere in its plans. To this extent, then, Mar Shimun is responsible for the present disaster.

2. The Sumeil incident was without any excuse whatsoever, and more than cancels the moderation which the Government has used toward the Assyrians until it took place.

3. The Government probably used the growing Assyrian discontent as a counter-irritant to the Shia-Sunni trouble in lower Iraq. I have been told that had the Assyrian incident not occurred there would have been a Shia outbreak in the South. When Feisal returned hurriedly from England this summer it was reported that the reason was the Shia discontent, rather than the Assyrian trouble. The Assyrian uprising made a splendid appeal to Iraqi patriotism against a foreign group, and Moslem prejudice against the Christians, and diverted attention from internal Moslem troubles.

4. It was hardly fair to put such an involved and difficult problem as the Assyrian question into the hands of a new and inexperienced government. It ought to have been settled by the British before they relinquished their mandate. British persuasion and British promises brought the Assyrians to this country, British policy should have provided for them. In that sense the British were at fault.

It is difficult to play the prophet and foresee the future. There is at present, amongst the very nationalistic Government circles, definite anti-British and anti-Christian feeling. It would not be impossible that the present Cabinet might force Feisal to relinquish his throne and set up a republic, destroying all British treaties. No one knows. But I think that within a fairly short time the situation will be clarified, and we will be able to return to our stations.

Since all mail is being censored I am sending this by Miss Honse to Jerusalem. Please be extremely guarded in any reply you may make. As soon as the mails are once again reliable, I will inform you.

I am sending a copy of this to Dr. Cantine, and one to the Near East Christian Council's Committee on Government and Missions.

Please inform any of the missionaries' relatives who make inquiry that the members of the Mission are in no danger, and are only temporarily detained in Baghdad.

With greetings from all the Mission.

Very sincerely,

(Signed) J.S.B.

Secretary

Copy to Chamberlain
Cautious
Sept. 22 Siehardt.

Rev. J. W. Willoughby,
American, Mission,
Mosul, Iraq.

Telegrams: SYNODICAL, MOSUL.

SEP 14 1933

27 August, 1933.

Dr. R. E. Speer,
156 Fifth Avenue,
New York, N.Y.

Dear Dr. Speer:

I enclose a few remarks on the present Iraq situation. I have read Cumberland's letter, and take the liberty of starring certain paragraphs in my writing which deal with incidents which he does not treat. Please circulate the paper freely among such persons as Dr. Chamberlain and any who might be interested; then when you have finished with it, please mail to

Mrs. B. H. Rankin,
534 East Bowman Street, ^{BM}
Wooster, O.

Mrs. Rankin will show it to Dr. McDowell if he is still in that city. My general cautionary remarks in the use of the paper, of course do not apply to you, as I trust your judgment implicitly.

I hope we can be back in Mosul within a couple more days. We may not feel free to express ourselves ad libitum for some time to come; but will doubtless devise means to send any really important news.

Sincerely yours,

J. W. Willoughby.

703 Church Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan.

January 13, 1932

Dr. Robert E. Speer, Sec
Presbyterian Bd. Foreign Missions,
156 Fifth Avenue, New York City

Dear Dr. Speer:

Your letter of December 10th, is before me. You ask me if some time I would set down for you, briefly yet comprehensively, a statement of the Mosul situation as I understand it. I need not tell you that it gives me special pleasure to be called upon to render some service in the cause of the Master.

I have taken time to study the questions and to collect my thoughts. You will remember, of course, that I have been away from the field for nearly four years which fact may affect the accuracy of some of my answers.

Your inquiries are as follows:

I. The Evangelical Assyrians: How many are there? Where are they located? What is the Mission doing for them?

1. How many are there?

I take it that you mean by "evangelical Assyrians" members of the Evangelical Church and their families. But it will be proper I think to include also such as have had long continued association with us and while not enrolled as Protestants are recognized as evangelicals in faith and life: all residing now in Iraq.

After calling the roll by communities my estimate of their numbers is two thousand, including men, women and children.

2. They are located as follows:

(a) Bagdad: City and suburb; groups located along the rail road lines - Bagdad to the Persian border; Bagdad to Kerkuk; Bagdad to Busra. The largest group is the one in Bagdad city.

(b) Mosul city.

(c) Villages in the Mosul area; Dwelling in villages largely of their own construction, grouped according to their tribal connections, and having as their political centers the following villages: Semail; Duhuk; Zakho; Elkosh; Ain Sufani; Amadia; Berwar; These are largely the mountain ashirets, Tiary, Baz, Jelu, Tkhoma, Ishtazin and Gawar, all of them in close touch with us through the years. Each such center would have perhaps on an average four refugee villages grouped about it. Our mountaineer Protestants are intermingled with these fellow tribesmen.

(d) Groups of Evangelicals who have maintained their identity throughout the war period.

Dihi: in Supna: These many years an organized Church.

Bohtan group, remnants of the Bohtan churches in Monsoria; Mar Akha; MarYokhanan etcet. West of Tigris, having Zakho as center.

Amadia group, old time congregations.

The Dihi and Bohtan groups are as distinctively evangelical as any of our own Scotch-Irish country churches. The Dihi people are in their own village in which they maintained themselves throughout the war.

The Bohtan group have selected for themselves, with the permission of the government, a location west of the Tigris which is more or less exposed being rather in close proximity to the borders of Turkish and French territory.

3. What is our Mission doing for them?

(a) Bagdad and vicinity: You will remember the large Congregation in old building on the outskirts of the city; that work was committed to the care of Kasha Pera Mirza and Rabi Khendo: They fostered it until it became as enlightened and strong as any of our old churches in Urumia. Under Rabi Khendo the church schools (which were organized by Mrs. McDowell) became as efficient as any of the government schools and were highly commended by the British School supervisor. Kasha Pera faithfully established preaching places in two other quarters of the city: He also as opportunity could be found visited various groups along the railroads leading out of Bagdad. The whole Bagdad area has been fairly well pastored.

It is to be regretted that it must be said that during the last two years there has been retrogression, both in the schools and in the church. The community has been weakened by withdrawal of some of its best elements to Persia. The departure of Kasha Pera Mirza to America, further weakened the enterprise and led to unfortunate complications. Withdrawal of Mission support has further discouraged them.

(b) Mosul city: The evangelical group in the city has been faithfully shepherded by good Kasha Keena assisted by Rabi Eset who has faithfully and efficiently acted as matron for our small hostel and been the life and directing energy in all work for our Assyrian girls and women: There is stated worship; Sabbath school; Christian Endeavor. At intervals Kasha Keena has made visits to outlying groups of Evangelicals to administer the Sacraments and to give heart to the people in general.

(c) Evangelical groups in the villages of Mosul Area:

For care of these scattered groups there are six of our regular native staff so located as to be able to cover the field. In addition to these there are three unpaid helpers who give largely of their time and whose devotion is not surpassed by the paid helpers.

In general it can be said that our flock is as adequately shepherded as the average church group here at home.

(d) Education: In this matter there is serious lack. Our people feel this deprivation of educational privileges very greatly. In the city of Mosul our Assyrian girls are attending the government schools which while fairly efficient along educational lines do not and cannot afford a high moral environment nor Biblical and religious instruction. The boys have their choice between the government schools and the two Nestorian schools, the one taught by Mr. Panfil and the other by Kasha Joseph Kalatia.

In the villages we have no schools at all which sad fact is greatly lamented by our people. They are perplexed: we "used to have some thirty or more schools in the villages; Why not now?"

II. The Old Church Assyrians: How many? Where located? What is their Relation to the Patriarch and to his Family?

It is difficult to make an estimate of the numbers of the Old Church Assyrians now in Iraq. There have been many changes and fluctuations; so even since I left four years ago.

We have, however, a basis for an estimate furnished by General Austin, Refugee Camp Commandant at Kakuba in his published report made when the camp was at its ~~maximum~~ maximum.

He states the total number to be 45,000 and divides them roughly into three equal classes - Armenians; Urumians and Mountaineers.

The Urumians would include Salmas and the mountain districts bordering on the Urumia plains. Allowing for Evangelicals and Roman Catholics, also for losses by exodus and over against such losses the gains from that portion of the mountain population that lived on the Mosul side of the mountains remaining there during the war and were not included in the Camp estimate, 20,000 would seem to me to be a very conservative estimate for the old church Assyrians.

THEIR LOCATION

Bagdad and suburbs; Villages, along the railway lines to Persian border and to Kerkuk

Mosul City: Oil Fields; Army Service.

VILLAGES: Some fifty villages, largely of their own construction grouped about central government villages on the main highways leading out from Mosul to the north, east and south these government villages, i.e., occupied by some minor government official, are Rawanduz; Nowcheeah; Elkosh; AinSufni; Semail; Zakho; Duhuk; Supna valley; Anadia valley; Berwar valley. They are grouped for the most part according to their tribal connections.

It should be noted that the Assyrians have pitched their tents toward their own country, occupying the border land. The territory they have settled in impinges on Persia, Turkey, and French Mandate.

What is their Relation to the patriarch and to his Family?

This also is a difficult question, especially after an absence of nearly four years. In general it can be said that the spirit of the people toward their Patriarch ranges all the way from fervent loyalty on the one side, to general religious indifference to open antagonism, on the other side. The antagonism centers about one individual, a Kasha Yosep Kalaita, whose opposition is based largely on his selfish purposes. The Patriarchate has never been of higher moral and spiritual character than it is at present. The Patriarch, still a very young man, was educated in England under the personal supervision of the Archbishop of Canterbury. I am personally acquainted with him and know him to be spiritually alive, of fine moral character, fair mental equipment and concerned for the spiritual welfare of his people. He is modest and courteous in all his relationships. His Bishops are loyal to him with one possible exception. The great majority of his people would stand by their Patriarch under any circumstances and it is probable that the disaffected element in a crisis would rally to his support. The Protestants undoubtedly would support him

This question includes the House of the Patriarch: The member of His house that stands closest to him in all affairs is his aunt, Lady Surma, who in several interregnums has been officially recognized by the British officials as acting and responsible Head of the Assyrians. The next group would be composed of his father and mother and younger brothers and sisters. There are also several close relatives who are in close contact with the Patriarch and are sometimes called into family counsels.

The father of Mar Shimon David effendi, has held a position with the government as Commander of the Assyrian military force numbering at times, perhaps two thousand rifles. The immediate economic household consists of the Patriarch, Lady Suma, the father and mother and their minor children. There is also a fringe of indigent relatives and servants. Visitors are many and cannot be turned away.

Their household revenue consists of offerings from the people, free willed or levied; and such stipends as they receive from the Irak government and through the Episcopal Mission, amounts unknown to me.

I know that they feel the necessity to economize and that they do make such endeavor in their own family circle. e.g. The children take turns in having new clothes for their important feast days. They show no false pride in their economies - ~~xxxx~~ unless it be in their pride of hospitality.

Family attachment is strong; the members are loyal to one another; harmony prevails. So far as I know the younger members of the family bear a good reputation and enjoy the affection of their people.

The name of an important member of the family has been omitted, Zaya, brother to David effendi and uncle of the Patriarch. He is the family treasurer, in highest repute among all classes for honesty, good business judgment and inoffensive character. He is a member of the inner household circle.

III. Other Christian Groups in the Mosul Area

What are the political Status and the conditions of each of these groups?

The other Christian groups in the Mosul Area are, The Jacobites; The Chaldeans; The Armenians; and the Protestants. (Arabic speaking.) These are all native to the Mosul region. Taken all together they still constitute the smallest of the minority groups, with the exception of the Jews and the Yexidees.

The Jacobites dwell in part in the villages but for the greater part in the City of Mosul. In the city they are a strong and influential body; possessed of considerable wealth; are in good repute with the government; have a resident bishop; they rank high in intelligence and character; make much of their parochial schools; many of their young men and women have received a higher education in the American schools in Mardin and Beirut. These forty years or more they have fraternized most cordially with the Protestants. They have been influential in softening Moslem prejudices. Their ecclesiastical center is in Deir Zafran, near Mardin. They have many communities in Turkey and Palestine and also on the Malarbar coast in India.

I cannot give accurate figures as to their numbers in Irak.

The Chaldeans: Is a Uniate Church under the Pope of Rome; have developed under the care of a French Mission having the patronage of the French government. They are strong in numbers, both in the city and in the villages, Elkosh, Telkeif, Teliskof, Botnai, Bartelli, and others. They are a proselyted offshoot from the Nestorian church. Backed by the strong French Mission they wage an unceasing effort the parent body to Rome. The Chaldeans have paid little attention to education and are correspondingly lower in character and social culture. They have many wealthy families and have always been active in political affairs. They have a strong community in Bagdad.

The Armenians: These are comparatively few in numbers; are largely of the merchant class, appreciative of schools, intelligent and influential.

The Protestants: These as you know are few in numbers but out of proportion to their numbers have standing and influence in the community, among Moslems and before the government.

The Syrian Catholics should have been mentioned in connection with the Chaldeans being also a Uniate Church in connection with Rome.

Their parent Church is the Jacobite Church; they are much fewer in numbers than the Chaldeans and correspondingly weaker in wealth and influence. They also are under the French Mission.

As regards the Political Status of these Christian groups it may be said in general that there is a recognition of them in the framework of the government. Christians will be found on some of the important municipal and vilayet or Boards of control, but to a very large consent they are silent partners. Christians occupy some executive positions of importance and trust, both in the city and in the outlying governmental centers. But the controlling positions, both executive and judicial, are in the hands of the Arab Moslems. ~~The~~

The government as a whole is firmly in the grasp of the Islamic Arabs. The courts are biased toward the followers of the Prophet.

The more intelligent classes can be depended upon to maintain a friendly attitude toward the Christians. But the spirit of the Islamic masses is fundamentally hostile toward all non-Moslem and requires but a spark to explode in violence toward them. It is a notorious fact that the cause of a non-Moslem before any of the courts is per se prejudiced. Without the shadow of a doubt the withdrawal of the British mandates will afford occasion for serious injustice to the non-Moslem minorities both in the courts and in the executive offices.

It is possible that due to the remarkable changes that have come about in recent years in the religious sentiment among Moslems in general there may be a lessening danger of serious massacres but aside from such violence it may be expected that economic jealousy and rivalry will be active factors in the relationship between Moslems and Christians in which the stronger will not scruple to use their advantage as intrenched in governmental privilege. What is meant can be understood from a parallel case in America - the relationship between the whites and the blacks.

This menace to the Christian minorities in Irak is sufficiently great and so assured that proper steps should be taken through the League of Nations, before the British have withdrawn to cast some safeguards about them. And it is both proper and advisable that this should be done for all minorities without distinction of creed as fully for the Yezidees as for the Christians.

IV. What is this present situation as to the Episcopal Mission and Mr. Panfil?

What are its relations to the Patriarch and his Family?
And to the Assyrians?

I have no up to date personal knowledge that would enable me to answer these two questions.

V. Your impression that the Episco¹2alians are discontinuing their financial support;
Mr. Lamsa's intimation that the Mission to the Old Church Assyrians might be passed over to the Presbyterians if they would subsidize the Patriarch's Household:

This is distinctly sad news: sad news in this, that it seems to indicate the final degree of waning interest on the part of the Episcopal Church at large in this remnant of the Church of the East. You have not asked me directly for my opinion in the matter, but it seems to me to be inadvisable for the Presbyterian Church to assume this heavy responsibility on the basis suggested. We do have a mission and a responsibility but it seems to me that they can be discharged with greater advantage to the Assyrians without formal assumption of trusteeship. Were we to assume such formal charge of affairs it is to be feared that there would be a complete withdrawal both of financial aid and, more important, political support on the part of their British friends; while if we remain unobligated and need arises these old time friends cannot but feel an obligation to extend a helping hand, especially in the way of political influence, and at the same time the Presbyterians can be depended upon to help meet the emergency.

It is evident that this ancient Church is approaching an extremely bad bit of road in their very long and chequered pilgrimage. My sympathy is awakened for them and my concern. It pleases me, Dr. Speer, that it finds you awake to the circumstances and so sympathetic.

A recent number of the periodical, *The Near East*, reports that Mar Shimon has addressed a petition to the British government requesting that he and his people be transferred to some less exposed location.

He is justified in so ^{asking} but it is not probable that his request can be granted. I can see no other alternative for him and his people than to cast in their lot with the other minorities. But it should not be overlooked that their position locally and their situation politically render the hazards more serious for them.

The situation for them is so serious that special attention should be given to it. Before withdrawing from their mandate the British will of course put in writing some stipulations as between themselves and the Iraq government: would it be possible to have included a clause relating to the rights of the minorities? Naturally for diplomatic reasons no special mention can be made of the Assyrians, what is done would have to be done in the name of all the Christian minorities.

Would it be possible to have a delegate at large appointed to the League of Nations whose sole duty it would be to keep a watchful eye on all weaker minorities especially such as are under alien government? To whom appeals could be made?

VI. You refer to a small sum set aside for Assyrians relief and not available for anything else.

This would mean a safe income from it of about one thousand dollars, annually. I take it that this fund must be used for the benefit of the people in general or for such portion of them as may be suffering severely as from famine, epidemic of disease or some political disaster. It occurs to me that this may become a providential resource for the near future which we may be very grateful to have to draw on.

I fear what I have written may prove very inadequate but it has been a pleasure to me to be called upon.

Just a few minutes ago a letter reached me by post from an old friend of mine in Mosul. He is a deacon in the Old Church, for years was head teacher of the school under the English Mission in the mountains and until recently has been teacher in the Episcopalian school under Mr. Panfil in Mosul. He worked with me during the Relief period in Persia, Bakuba and Bagdad; was one of my right hand men, capable and trustworthy; and

and worked on an exceedingly small salary. For some reason unknown to him his salary has been discontinued and he has been left an old man with a large family dependent upon him and now without any means of support. In speaking of the people at large he takes a gloomy view of the situation. There is an obscure reference to an unsatisfactory condition in the Episcopalian Mission in Mosul.

This man is loved and trusted by Mar Shimon and Lady Surma. During all their trouble he has been a trusted staff to lean upon.

May I express the hope that this Assyrian people and Church be brought to the attention of such prayer circles as you are in touch with.

Very gratefully and cordially,

(Signed) E. W. McDowell.

R. C. Cumberland

Dohuk, Iraq, 30.9.33.

97

Dear Doctor Speer:-

It is only a week or so since I wrote to you: I hope you will not be inundated by this unaccustomed flood of correspondence from Dohuk! And the only thing this time is a copy of a recent letter to Peekskill; I sent most of it also to Summit. You see, I've just been reading the new manual -- for which our thanks.

I hope to send soon a flock of clippings from the IRAQ TIMES, which I promised long ago. I doubt that they will give you any new information, but they may be interesting as showing what is (and is not) published in this country. I am sorry that I did not succeed in turning up one from last ^{or June} May, a communiqué from the Press Bureau, announcing the "happy ending" of the Assyrian trouble.

The atmosphere is not what one could ~~xxx~~ call that of peace and confidence, but there is not a great deal of actual disorder. All eyes are turned toward Geneva.

With most cordial regard,

Sincerely yours,

R. C. Cumberland

Roger C. Cumberland

OR

FILING DEPT.

30-11
JUL 27 1933

SECRETARIAT

JUL 19 1933

Dohuk, Iraq, 20 June, 1933.

Dear Doctor Speer:-

Your last letter to me, dated 6 April, has been acknowledged (on 24 April) but your request that you be informed as to the repercussions from my article in WORLD DOMINION calls for some further word. They reperculated, all right! The thing was copied in THE NEAR EAST AND INDIA, and from that two of the Baghdad newspapers copied it in Arabic translation, and I woke up to find myself the unwilling center of quite a little tempest. The Mar Shimon party roundly condemn me for writing "against the Assyrians", to which I reply that the truth cannot be changed, and if they find it against them, they are the ones that must change. Those who do not hold by the Patriarch say that it is not very complimentary to the Assyrians, but that it is an accurate statement. Dr. Petros made no reply to my asking what he thought of it. Mr. Panfil commended me (to my face, at least, and I think genuinely.) I received a most scurrilous anonymous letter (in Syriac). Recently there was privately printed (in Arabic) a tirade against the Baghdad newspapers for refusing to publish an attack on me, together with the attack; it was that (simply ad hominem) rather than any attempt to refute what I had written. The government confiscated this pamphlet, but not, happily, before I received a copy; and I was urged to prosecute for libel, which I don't care to do. My chief satisfaction in the matter comes from the fact that no one has seriously challenged the ~~fact~~ accuracy of the facts of what I wrote. But my disappointment is much greater than my satisfaction; I did not want to stir up a fuss, nor be party ~~of~~ to an altercation: for that reason I tried to write both accurately and impartially. But (tho I seem to have succeeded in writing thus) the net result, locally, seems mostly contention and ill-will, which I heartily regret if it ends there, but which may be of ultimate value to the Assyrians if it contributes to their awakening to the real situation. The official thanks of the government acted as at least a little balm to me; and it is amusing to note how accurately the last paragraph of my article -- the prophetic part about Assyrian reactions -- is fulfilled. To view a ~~maxx~~ situation objectively is, perhaps, more than can be asked of so primitive a people.

The foreign expert which the government promised the League of Nations as settlement officer arrived recently in the person of Major Thomson, who seems to understand his work well. A large section of the Lower Tiaris (the principal group not yet settled) is accepting the very generous offer of the government; they have as their leader Malik Khoshaba, a son-in-law of Kasha Keena. Mar Shimon, however, has commanded those faithful to him to have nothing to do with any government offer, and still holds out to them absurd promises of felicity somewhere else, tho where is not mentioned. As of course you know, the Persia scheme came to nothing. The essential conflict is the same as when I last wrote: the Patriarch still claims civil authority over his people and the government denies it. Feeling runs high, and it would not take much, these days, to start a conflagration. For instance, an ex-Levies officer comes riding into Dohuk with thirty-four armed horsemen; it does not conduce to peace and quiet.

Word has just reached us of the hearty approval of the Board by General Assembly. We join in it.

Ever sincerely yours,

R. C. Cumberland

**THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U. S. A.
156 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK**

MEMORANDUM September 28, 1933.

FROM Miss Sheppard

To Dr. Speer

My dear Dr. Speer:

I am attaching recent letters from the missionaries in Iraq: original letter of Mr. Cumberland to you; original letter of Mr. Willoughby to you; copy of Mr. Badeau's letter to Dr. Chamberlain. These letters were referred to at the last Board meeting, with the very brief record as follows:

"Miss Sheppard reported briefly on the situation in Iraq, as outlined in the confidential letters of August 25th and 26th, from Mr. Badeau and Mr. Cumberland, with particular reference to the request of the American Minister that all missionaries be withdrawn from the Mosul area and remain temporarily in Baghdad. Both missionaries of the Board are in no danger."

Dr. Chamberlain, Dr. Cantine and I talked together regarding the fact that Mr. Cumberland had been accused of political activity. We, of course, all agreed that until some further word came, he and the mission were handling the matter in a wise way. I think both Dr. Cantine and Dr. Chamberlain thought that in the expected interview with the Foreign Minister, Mr. Cumberland's situation would be cleared, although it might be impossible for him to return to his station for some time.

x See Memo attached

A few days before Mr. Cumberland's letter arrived, Mr. Lamsa called at your office and talked with Miss Connell^x regarding Mr. Cumberland's article in the April issue of the "World Dominion". We noted that you and he had been in correspondence about it. I think Dr. Cantine rather wonders whether Mr. Cumberland can prove several of his statements in his article, and I think some of us wish his facts had been phrased in a little different way. Nevertheless, I judge everyone is agreed on the united attitude of the Mesopotamia Mission, that the Assyrians must try to integrate themselves in the nation in whose confines they live. Dr. Chamberlain was expecting to see Mr. Panfil's correspondence with Dr. Emhardt. At Dr. Chamberlain's request, I sent him copies of Mr. Cumberland's and Mr. Willoughby's letters, that he might share them with Dr. Emhardt. We judge that the 2000 pounds which Mr. Panfil put up, as guaranteeing that Mr. Yaku would keep the peace, would have been forfeited.

I am also attaching a brief statement from Dr. Cantine, following his reading of Mr. Cumberland's and Mr. Willoughby's letters. I have not sent out Mr. Willoughby's letter to Dr. McDowell, as it seemed to me Mr. Willoughby would prefer that you read it and sent it on with any comments you desired.

Cordially yours,

Irene Sheppard
Irene Sheppard.

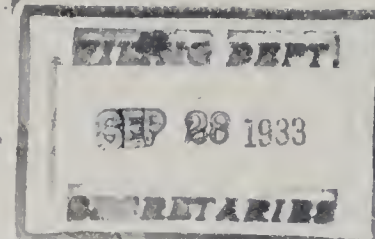
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From Miss Counsel

DR. MCAFEE, RECD.

SEP 12 1933

✓



September 12, 1933

s'd

A Mr. George Lamsa of 18 W. 25th Street, called to see Mr. Speer today. He said he had been to see Dr. Chamberlain also but he was out of the city and that he had talked with his assistant. (Later I learned that it was Mr. Potter with whom he had talked).

Mr. Lamsa's object in coming was to let Mr. Speer know that the Assyrians in Mesopotamia were all convinced that the cause of the massacre of 700 of their people is Mr. Cumberland's article which he wrote some time ago for "World Dominion". They are greatly incensed and will surely assassinate Mr. Cumberland. Mr. Lamsa because of his warm regard for Mr. Speer and deep love of Dr. Shedd advises strongly that the Board recall Mr. Cumberland, who he says is not the type missionary like Dr. Shedd who never mixed in politics or tried to make money. Mr. Lamsa further stated that the State Department in Washington disapproves of Mr. Cumberland's article. In the course of his conversation Mr. Lamsa said that the Assyrians here in America will assassinate Mr. Cumberland also if they get a chance.

No word has been received by Mr. Speer's office from the State Department.

Miss Counsel

IRENE SHEPPARD
RECEIVED

SEP 27 1933

REV. JAMES CANTINE, D. D.
STONE RIDGE, NEW YORK

5 Stone Ridge, N.Y.
Sept. 25, 1933.

My dear Miss Sheppard:-

I am in your debt for your letter of September 22 and for the enclosed copies of letters from Mr. Cumberland and Mr. Willoughby, which I have read with much interest.

It is good to know that the missionaries on the field agree so well in their recital of facts and the interpretation thereof.

As for the future so much depends upon what action is taken by the British Government and the League. It is deeply to be regretted that the former king's influence is not now to be exercised. I think his hand would have been able to more rapidly bring back conditions to normal.

The correspondence with, or of, Mr. Panfil should be most interesting. Poor man, I fear he is in rather deeply!

Mr. Cumberland's return to Dohuk and his work in the north may be delayed for some time, and all the work of the Mission for the Assyrians is in the melting pot. We can only hope that this "turning and overturning" will speedily work for good.

Very cordially yours,

James Cantine

Letters of Mr. Cumberland and Mr. Willoughby enclosed.

Roger C. Cumberland

Copies to Chamberlain
Eulhardt
Cautani

CONFIDENTIAL

L/2/231 Sinak, Baghdad, Iraq,
26 August, 1933.

Dear Doctor Speer:-

I do not have my files with me here in Baghdad (and may never see them again), and so cannot say when it was that your last letter arrived. But some account of recent events in our field is sure to have reached you, and you may be wondering about its effect on us. At the moment our situation is that of very unwilling inhabitants of Baghdad. On Sunday, 6 August, I received a telephone call from Col. Stafford, the Administrative Inspector in Mosul, asking me to bring my wife to Mosul, which I did that day. I returned to Dohuk the next Tuesday; on Thursday of the next week (the 17th) a telegram from Mr. Badeau said for all of Mosul Station to come immediately to Baghdad, without questioning; we did so, and arrived here the afternoon of the 18th. Technically I am the culprit; the Iraqi Foreign Minister wrote to our Minister, Mr. Knabenshue, complaining of my "political activities" and requesting my removal from Dohuk. Mr. Knabenshue thought it wise for all of us to be here in Baghdad for a time. I might add that no specific charges were made and no evidence brought against me; and that up to the present I have not succeeded in getting an interview with the Foreign Minister. It seems to me obvious that Government does not want any foreign observer in the Dohuk district at present, rather than that it objects to any alleged political activities of mine. For my relations with Iraqis, both official and personal, have always been distinctly friendly; and I am conscious of having given no offence. It is not surprising that Government wishes to have the present situation concealed; it is not a pleasant sight. It is correspondingly undesirable, from my viewpoint, to be away from home. During a great part of my ten years in this country, I have had a deep sense of futility, and have had to live by faith; but in recent weeks it has seemed that I may have been of some real value to the community. So long as I was there, I felt a fair degree of security, not only for my own person and home and the village of Babilu, but also for my friends and neighbors. And if anything serious was to happen, I was quite ready for that also, there in the place where I belong. But I find it hard to be content here in Baghdad; I shall do my utmost to arrange to return to Dohuk as soon as possible.

In the meantime it may be well for me to write as fully as possible regarding the situation; for a postal censorship is easily possible, and I shall probably have to refrain from writing some kinds of things. It will probably be advisable for letters from the USA to be worded discreetly. In these days when war psychology and wartime propaganda prevail, it is very difficult to get at the facts in the case. I am taking it for granted that you have read the accounts given by the press (we have no means of knowing what they may be), and hope to gather for and send to you clippings from the IRAQ TIMES regarding the Assyrians. In this letter I shall give chiefly background and side-lights that may help toward the understanding of official and popular reports. There are others who are better qualified than I to give an official account; but my position has given me an opportunity for observation of certain aspects that few others have had.

It may seem like wandering far afield, but there must be in mind the fact that underneath all the present difficulties are centuries of history that have woven themselves into the very character of the peoples concerned, whether Assyrians, Arabs, Turks, or Kurds. A strong case can be made (tho it is not my opinion) that, given these basic factors, the substance of the present situation was inevitably coming, and might as well be now as any other time. In more proximate and tangible terms, where things went astray was at the demarcation of the present Turko-Iraqi boundary, in 1925, leaving most of the mountain Assyrians dispossessed of their ancestral homes: the settlement problem is basic. A very interesting chapter might be written, if all the materials were available, on real and supposed British promises to the Assyrians; they form at least a part of the basis of the defiance of the Iraqi Government which has brought things to their present pass. Another basic factor, because it has strongly influenced both the policy of the Assyrians' leaders and the outlook of the people, is the fact that perhaps a majority of the young men of this milet have served at one time or another in the Levies. Mar Shimon has felt that he has had an army of ten thousand of the best soldiers in Iraq to back his claims; it is hardly credible that even he could have proceeded as he has, except on the basis of this idea, tho the event proved him wrong. And it is inevitable that those who have had little real training other than in the army should have the military mind, and should take it for granted that the natural and right way to settle a matter is by appeal to arms. I call these basic factors to mind because they go far to explain what has happened, tho I hold that the sad events of recent weeks were unnecessary and inexcusable.

I cannot say certainly when the patriarchal policy that has brought such disaster was formulated, but I saw no evidences of it before the arrival of Rassam and Cope about the first of 1930. I do not mean that the house of Mar Shimon had cooperated with Government until that time; but the huge promises of British support for a revived Assyrian Empire under Mar Shimon seem to have crystalized the ambitions of Surma Khanum for temporal authority and made them into a set purpose, regardless of the welfare of the Assyrian people. In her own words, spoken about Easter, 1931, "We will be kings or we will be killed." The hidden deception in that declaration is now brought to light: the first we means the house of Mar Shimon, the second, the helpless and innocent people. The Levies affair of June, 1932, revealed something of the nature of the patriarchal policy; the journey of Mar Shimon to Geneva, and his subsequent defiance of Iraqi authority, made it quite evident: the acquisition of Assyrian autonomy under Mar Shimon, and determined opposition to any movement that would prevent it, counting on British support in case of extreme need. And the certainty of British support was based partly on the promises made by Cope and partly on a grotesque idea of the importance to Britain of having the Assyrians happily settled in Iraq. Only with this policy in mind can one explain the repeated threats to emigrate and the final mad dash to Syria; and the constant and determined refusal of Mar Shimon to cooperate with Iraqi authorities, even when most generous terms were offered to him; and his violent opposition to ~~khawak~~ the efforts of those Assyrians who wished to be loyal Iraqis. It is hardly conceivable that he would have deliberately spoiled the chances for the Assyrians to settle in Iraq unless he had believed in ultimate British intervention, in his favor.

Perhaps the best evidence that Mar Shimon was not forced into the obstructionist position he has held in relation to the Government of Iraq, except by the motive of personal aggrandizement, is the fact that a large body of the Assyrians have found it possible to cooperate with Government. For the moment their position is shadowed by the notable victory that the patriarchal policy won at Semeil, with the aid of Muslim fanaticism and personal spite: the slaughter of innocent Assyrians. And there is danger that this victory will so dishearten those Assyrians who have been loyal to Iraq that their position in this country will become impossible. But I hope that wise counsels of moderation will prevail, both in Government and among Assyrians, and that the good work of settlement begun will be carried to a happy consummation. The definite break with the patriarchal policy (a difficult thing among a people so devoted to tradition) dates, I should say, from June, 1932. The movement away from the patriarch and toward cooperation with Government in temporal affairs developed rapidly. It is hard to give figures, but I should say that at least half of the Assyrians were ready to deal with Government on terms of mutual confidence, when recent events interrupted the normal course of affairs. Whether that mutual confidence can be restored or not remains to be seen; it will be with difficulty that either will be persuaded to believe the other.

Settlement has been a basic issue. Assyrians could not be expected to become contented and loyal Iraqis without assurance of security of their rights as owners or tenants of lands, as eligible persons to all forms of employment, and as participants in all benefits of Government. The type of life they are accustomed to is that of villagers engaged in agriculture and sheep-raising; so the land question was paramount. Settlement has been taking place ever since 1920, but has never been completed; the matter was brought to a focus by the arrival in the spring of Major Thomson, appointed by the Government to work on this problem. At that time Mar Shimon was in Baghdad defying the ministers of Government, refusing to renounce his claims to temporal authority over his people; so he was in no mood for cooperation with Major Thomson. When he reached Mosul and the villages, he found a surprising number of Assyrians that refused to talk about settlement so long as Mar Shimon was detained in Baghdad; and by others, prompted by patriarchal propaganda, absurd claims were made, such as that Government was obligated to acquire, by purchase or otherwise, sufficient and suitable lands for all Assyrians and to give it to them in freehold gratis. Others, however, acted reasonably, and the work of settlement was proceeding until interrupted by the activities of one Yaku, son of Malik Ismail of Upper Tiari, and a small group with him, who, since leaving the Levies, had been idle. They defied Government authority and said that the orders of Mar Shimon were what they acted upon. Yaku and his group of armed men went about the country stirring up discontent, and was called to book for disturbing the peace. He refused to come, and there was a very tense situation for some days. At last Col. Stafford, in the hope of saving the villagers, went to the village where Yaku was and gave him his personal safe conduct to Mosul, where a guarantee of £2000 for good conduct was required, and was furnished by Mr. Panfil. It was a blow, presaging disaster, to learn of the reaction to this incident among the patriarchal party. Col. Stafford had risked his life at the hands of the Assyrians and his position with the Iraqi Government in order to try to save the lives of innocent villagers who would be

implicated; Mr. Panfil risked (and has forfeited, I think) his property to try to bring peace; and the Mar Shimonite comment was, "See, the British will not let us down, no matter what we do." But the immediate danger of armed conflict was averted, and we ~~xxx~~ hoped for a peaceful solution. One thing that lessened the probability of it was the attitude taken by fanatical Muslims in Mosul and Baghdad. There was, no doubt, some genuine fear on their part of what the Assyrians might do; most of it was propaganda to the effect that these savage Assyrians, armed by the British to threaten the sovereignty of Iraq, must at all costs be immediately disarmed. This was retailed by rumor to the Assyrians as a definite Government policy to disarm them; and that, to them, was the same as pronouncing their death sentence at the hands of the Arabs and Kurdish tribesmen among whom they lived. From then on, mutual suspicion between Government and the patriarchal party increased, and rumors of all kinds multiplied at an amazing rate. In order to try to bring order out of the chaos that was rapidly developing, Government called into conference at Mosul about a hundred of the leaders of the Assyrians, including all shades of opinion, to make a definite statement of policy and to try to get a definite acceptance or refusal from the Assyrians. Iraq promised to arrange ~~for~~ settlement for all unsettled Assyrians in as good places as might be available without dispossessing present inhabitants, and to assist the orderly emigration of any who did not care to accept the terms offered. The conference split into two about equal parts, one accepting the terms, the other saying that Mar Shimon was their agent and they would not conduct negotiations except thru him.

After that conference, Yaku and some of the other leaders of the Mar Shimon party said they were going to Baghdad to consult the Patriarch; the next that was known of them was their presence in northeastern Syria, just across the Tigris from Peish-khabur. The word was spread from there that the destiny of the Assyrians was with the French; and from nearly every village at least a few of the young men shouldered their rifles and went to join Yaku. From many villages, especially those of Upper Tiari and Tkhuma, everyone went except the old men, the women, and the children. This was the strangest move of all -- to leave their crops, their flocks, their houses, and their families unprotected from the Arabs and Kurds -- and is quite inexplicable except as sheer madness or as a symptom of their basic belief that, in an extremity, British forces would protect them. These Assyrians are described by Iraqi press dispatches as rebels and insurgents, but I do not think those words accurately describe them. They were dupes of Mar Shimon and his agents, who told them that they were about to be disarmed in Iraq, and that Government had said that anyone who wished might leave the country, and this was the way to do it. The history of those days is undoubtedly known to you from press reports. I do not know how many Assyrians are now in Syria nor what is being done about them, nor how many took to the mountains, nor how many of those remain, or were killed, or surrendered. Accurate information is hard to get; the kind that is available is, in general, not worth passing on. This I do know: all or nearly all of the Assyrians' villages in the plain have been looted, some with loss of life; ~~all or~~ nearly all of those in the mountains are still secure. Most of the looting was done by Arabs and Kurds; most of the killing was done by the army, with how much of connivance with the civil authorities is not yet known, and may never be. It is significant that after the battle of Peish-khabur, no casualties have been reported by the army.

The massacre at Semeil is known to you. There were probably a few "rebels" in the village at the time, that is, those who had crossed over to Syria, and had gotten back. But nearly all were those ^{who} had been loyal to Government and were present there ~~xxxxxx~~ in obedience to Government order, having been told to come in from the surrounding villages for protection. They were all without arms, and were shot down in cold blood by the army. Such an exhibition of stark savagery and frenzied fanaticism has seldom been seen. In addition to this, I know not how many innocent people were taken from their homes in Dohuk, while I was there, and have not been seen since. How much of that kind of thing has been done in other places, I do not know. The situation seems quiet at present; whether there will be further outbreaks, I will not attempt to prophesy.

Yet some elements in the present situation that will affect the future can be discerned. One is that the reputation of the Assyrian warrior has vanished. Second, the tribes have seen with their own eyes that British armed forces, whether land or air, took no part in the recent operations. Third, old animosities between Muslims and Christians have been aroused and new ones created in recent months. Fourth (of local significance in the ~~xx~~ Dohuk district only, unless it should spread) two of the Kurdish tribes have quarreled over spoil, and it would take only a small incident to set them upon each other. Fifth (a seemingly absurd thing, but nevertheless significant) there is a shortage of eligible Kurdish girls at present; a good bride costs about \$300; and whether the young Kurds would consciously start out to get brides by conquest or not, the situation does make them restive. Sixth, the Semeil massacre and similar events have gone far to destroy the confidence of the Assyrians and of other minority groups, especially Christians, in the good faith of the Government. Seventh, there seems not to be the personal integrity in the government services to form a stable administration. To be sure, we as Americans are not in position to throw stones; but the objective fact remains that corruption is the rule rather than the exception in this country, and that it is not condemned by any body of public opinion that is strong enough to check it. The outlook is not bright; the necessity for the work we are here to do is all the more evident.

What course Government will take, I cannot forecast. I am sorry that for the present they have chosen to deny the facts of the Semeil massacre; it does no good. I do not believe that it represented the will of Government, but rather a combination of blood-lust, cowardice, and personal animosities, which Government might rightly disown, putting the blame on those ^{who} took matters into their own hands, from whom the penalty should be required. This course would argue good faith; the present course casts suspicion upon it. It is not surprising that Government was extremely vexed with Mar Shimon and his party; the surprising thing is that it was so long-suffering with them. The ~~xxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ Patriarch's insolent defiance of the Iraqi ministers, and the attitude of smug superiority of the ex-Levies officers, ~~was~~ very galling to Iraqis. But those causes are now removed, with Mar Shimon in Cyprus and other leaders of that party away from the Mosul region; the Government may well be genuinely appreciative of the loyalty shown by many of the Assyrians in the recent crisis. It is, perhaps, not surprising that public feeling, led on by Muslim fanatics, should be violently antagonistic to Assyrians in general; but a discriminating government will display a more intelligent attitude toward them. One of the most dis-

couraging features of the situation is the strong feeling, especially in Mosul, against all Assyrians, whether loyal to Government or not. Many Assyrians employed in all kinds of work are being dismissed these days, for no reason other than that they are Assyrians. If Iraq is not further to damage her good name, such unfair treatment of loyal Iraqi Assyrians must cease forthwith.

What course the Assyrians will take is still harder to forecast. For one thing, they can no longer be treated as a unit. The defeated Mar Shimon party can hardly remain in Iraq, and the Iraqi party can hardly do other than remain. My guess is that those now in Syria are likely to remain there; if so, it will be a relief on our side of the border. But there are grave difficulties in the way of any Assyrians remaining in Iraq, not only because of the attitude of the Muslim populace and perhaps that of Government, but also on account of their own characteristics. They have, in general, both a deep-seated fear of the Muslim majority, whether Kurds or ARABS, and a keen sense of their own superiority. At Semeil was proved what fanatical Islam and irresponsible government are capable of, and it will not soon be forgotten. I do not know how many of them will remember that patriarchal policy invited it, and that a wise policy, which would have kept the door closed to it, was possible.

Was it possible? Only from the Christian standpoint. It was not possible to a mind informed by fear, distrust, and hatred of the Muslim. Without a basis of mutual confidence, Muslims and Christians are, I suppose, bound to come to some such relationship as that which prevails here today. Nationalism did not furnish such a basis; the Mar Shimon refused nationalization; in recent days all distinctions other than those of the traditional enmity of Islam and Christianity disappeared. Being a loyal Iraqi meant nothing at Semeil. Historically, right to the present moment, there is not the necessary basis of mutual confidence. And mine is a voice crying in the wilderness when I say that it can be established. I know no one in the local community, whether Christian or Muslim, who believes it, nor any of the British officials. Only if the Assyrians adopt the mind of Christ can the old vicious circle of mutual fear, distrust, and hatred be broken. Nothing short of the divine aggression will accomplish it: "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." That is invincible.

The Assyrians, tho Christian in name, have not taken the Christian course. I am sometimes sanguine enough to hope that those who refused the Mar Shimon lead will still take it; and if they do, there is no reason why they should not stay in Iraq, and every reason why they should: to demonstrate the Christian way where their compatriots have failed. Perhaps it is weakness of faith on my part, but I confess that the realistic view seems to be that they will not rise to the occasion. There remain, then, two major problems. First, the care of the widows and orphans recently made. A good many of them (those closely related to Levies men) have been brought to Baghdad by air and encamped at Hinaidi, the Royal Air Force station near Baghdad. The rest are in charge of Major Thomson, a man of excellent abilities and good will. How they are eventually to be fitted into the scheme of things is a difficult problem. The second is still greater in scope: if the Assyrians in Iraq are not ready to take the Christian course, recent events have made it practically impossible for them to stay here. Emigration is the only answer.

Both of these are fundamentally British problems. I have not any information as to how they are going to be solved by them, but you will be able to get that by other means than by my writing. If it were in the hands of the group of administrators and advisers that I have known here, I should not doubt that a wise solution would be reached. But this will go to London and Geneva, where there cannot be such a background of understanding, and where ~~French~~ France will have a hand in it, on account of the connection with Syria. I have a profound distrust of French colonial policy. In spite of Iraqi denials, the main features of the facts will be known, and they cannot be entirely overlooked. Protests ought to be made. But I do think that armed intervention would have a reaction in this country opposite to that desired, unless the League or some country appointed by it is ready to step in and establish a complete foreign administration. After all, the independent status of Iraq has been recognized; it must be responsible for its own internal affairs, whether it does well or ill. Any effective appeal must be to the Iraqi conscience.

Mr. Badeau's letter to Dr. Chamberlain will give you a digest of the facts, and I understand that Mr. Willoughby has also written. I hope you will see the reports sent in by Mr. Panfil to his board; I should like to, but have not had the opportunity.

All of us keep well. I am finishing this a few minutes before Miss Honse sets out on her homeward journey, taking it with her to avoid the postal censor.

With sincere regard,



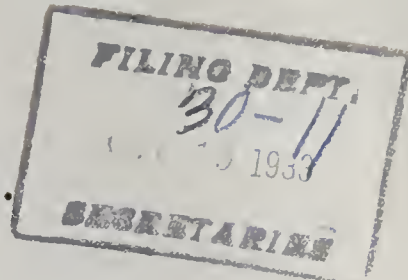
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Returned

with the same

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R. C. Cumberland

En



OCT 18 1933

Dohuk, Iraq, 25.9.33.

Dear Doctor Speer:-
Ans.

It will be a month tomorrow since I last wrote; tempus has done its favorite little trick! We drove to Mosul from Baghdad on the eleventh, and up here on the fourteenth; both trips were without incident. Autumn has arrived, and we are very happy to be at home again. We are keeping quite fit, tho exercise is something of a problem these days; it is not feasible to wander at large as formerly.

We were all shocked and grieved at the death of King Faisal. He had a grasp of the situation that was really notable. But we hope that his son and his advisors will carry on in the development of the immense possibilities of Iraq.

My last letter (dated 26 August) was hastily done, and some revision of it is needed. The only gross error I have noted is on p.3; Mr. Panfil's guarantee of Yaku was for £200, not £2000. Sorry; my typist is rather a washout. (Mr. Panfil, by the way, packed his goods and left some time ago, before the government order for his expulsion was executed.) The other revision I wish to make is an addition. On p. 5, the second paragraph gives some elements in the present situation that seem to me significant. The list is by no means exhaustive, but by all means there should have been included the fact that the prestige of the Iraq Army is very high at present -- in contrast to its former position in the public mind. It seems strange that with all the talk of peace there is these days, the army is the determining factor in the affairs of a great many nations. ~~xxxx~~ I do not think that is the case here in Iraq, but I should say that the tendency is in that direction. Another item: it seems to me there is grave danger that the affairs of Iraq become a sort of football in international politics. We have a difficult situation here: no one will deny that. But the way to deal with it is on its own merits, according to reason, not sentiment, and for the welfare of all the people involved, not of one party. What I am afraid of is that the representatives of the western world will get together at Geneva and swallow whole the propaganda that Mar Shimon puts out (never dreaming that a Patriarch of an ancient church might misrepresent the situation) and, with sobbing sentimentality will set out to avenge the wrongs of their "Christian" brother. The Muslims are our brothers, too; and vengeance is God's business, not ours. Geneva, by attempting to force anything on Iraq, would be doing essentially the same kind of thing that they condemn Iraq for doing to a minority. As I said in my former letter, an effective appeal must be to the Iraqi conscience.

We have not written much in recent months, and it may be that our relatives and friends have addressed inquiries to you about our situation. I'm sorry to ~~kr~~ add to your already heavy burdens; but I trust you have reassured them, and have given to our supporting churches at Summit and Peekskill some idea of our situation, as gathered from my former letter. But I hope that what I write may be kept out of publication; it is not my intent to mix in politics.

With warmest regards from us both,

Ever sincerely,

R. C. Cumberland

P. T. Speer

JOHN B. KEENA
6265 KINCAID ROAD
CINCINNATI, OHIO

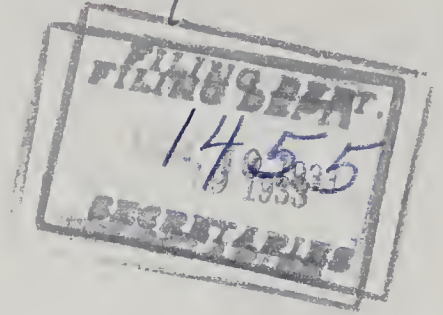
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OCT 14 1933

Oct. 12, 1933.

Ans.

Dr. Robert E. Speer
New York City -



My dear Dr. Speer:

I appreciate your kind letter of the seventh. Ever since I heard of this sad news from Mesopotamia I have been trying to get a direct word from Mosul, but thus far I have not received a message from my father, and, consequently, I have been very anxious about the situation in Iraq. It is strange that none of us has received a single line from the folks at Mosul or Baghdad.

✓

JOHN B. KEENA
6265 KINCAID ROAD
CINCINNATI, OHIO

I do not understand just what happened and why. It seems that as soon as the British authorities withdrew officially from the Mandated territory, the Iraqi army attacked our poor people. But I do not wish to condemn the Iraqi troops until I have heard the whole story.

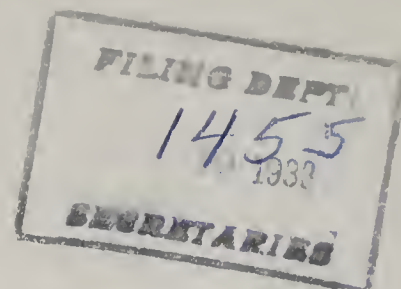
Our people in Chicago are frantic and in their distress have appealed to you for help. The only thing that we can do is this: let us proceed under your direction to appeal

JOHN B. KEENA
6265 KINCAID ROAD
CINCINNATI, OHIO

for insufficient representations
to the British government
through our ambassador at
London in an effort to stop
the repetition of such atrocities.
I am sure to do anything I can
through our congressmen here
in Cincinnati whom I know
quite well. Do you think this
is practical? Sometimes such
insufficient appeals are even more
effective than direct and public
action.

I know that no one has greater
sympathy for our people than you
have, and our hearts - all of us -
go out to our poor West Indian people
in their seemingly endless distressing
sorrow.

Respectfully yours,
John B. Keena



October 19, 1933

Mr. John B. Keena,
6265 Kincaid Road,
Cincinnati, Ohio.

My dear John:

I have just got back from attending some of our Synod meetings and write at the first opportunity in reply to your good letter of October 12th. I don't see why you shouldn't carry out your suggestion of speaking to your Congressman and asking him to make inquiries at the State Department in behalf of the Assyrians here in America and their deep anxiety on account of their kindred in Iraq.

Our last letter from Iraq is from Mr. Cumberland, dated September 25th and indicating that he is back in Dohuk. He says that he drove up from Bagdad to Mosul on the 11th and from there to Dohuk on the 14th, and that his trips were without incident. He does not say anything in this letter about the situation except to report that Mr. Panfil has left Mosul. He does not seem to see anything that can be done except to appeal to the conscience of the Iraqi government.

I shall be consulting Dr. Chamberlain very shortly and I think it would be well if he also would make inquiries of our State Department in the name of our United Mission in Mesopotamia.

With warm regard,

Your sincere friend,

RES:B